EDGAR RICE® BURROUGHS' JOHN CARTER OF MARS®

2d20™

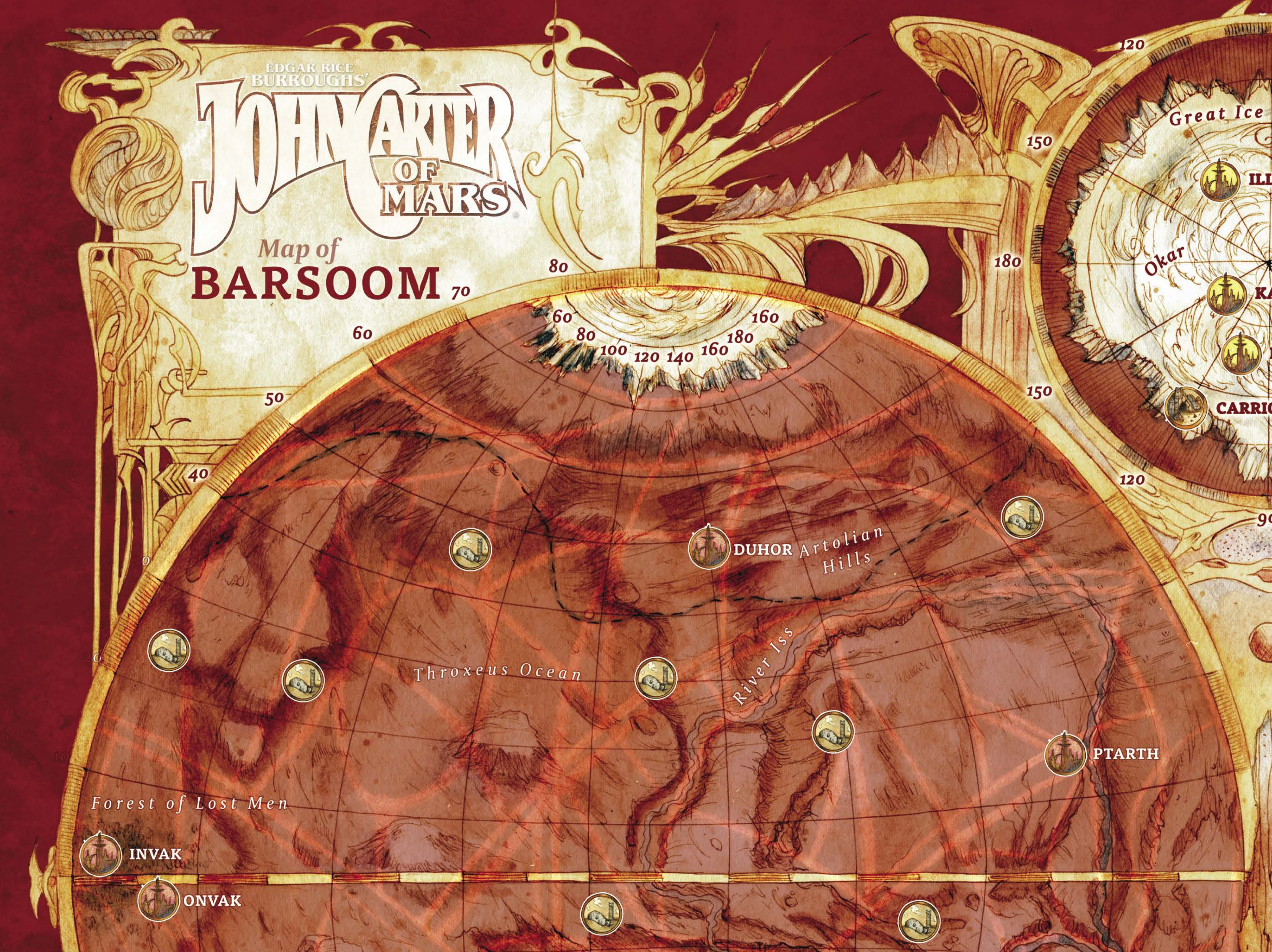
PHANTOMS OF MARS
CAMPAIGN GUIDE

MODIPHIUS™ ENTERTAINMENT

EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS'

JOHN CARTER OF MARS

Map of BARSOOM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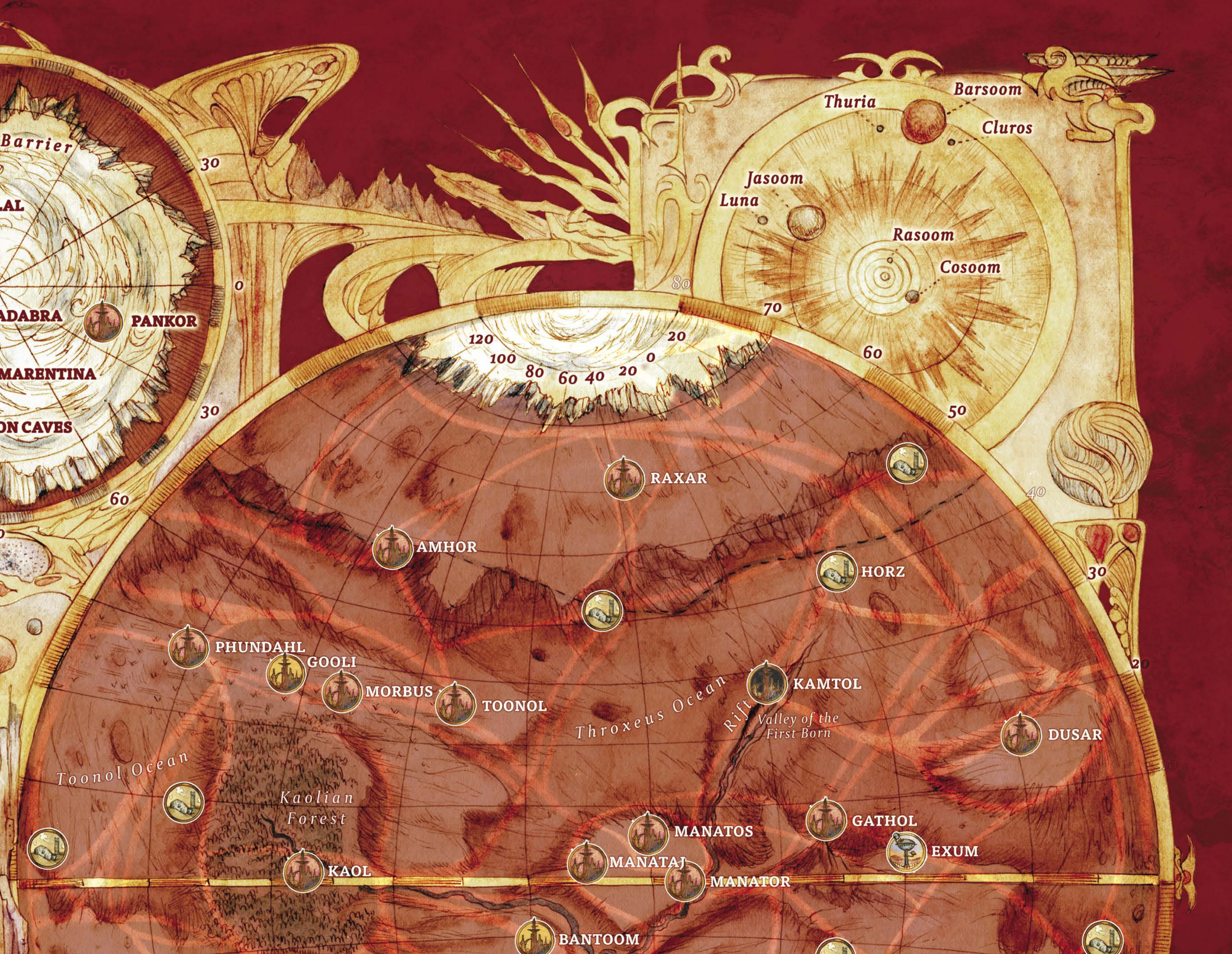

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Luna
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Cosoom
RAXAR
AMHOR
HORZ
PHUNDAHL
GOOLI
MORBUS
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KAMTOL
Throxeus Ocean
Rift
Valley of the First Born
DUSAR
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Kaolian Forest
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EDGAR RICE® BURROUGHS'

JOHN CARTER OF MARS®

LINE DEVELOPMENT

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BENN GRAYBEATON

RULES DEVELOPMENT

BENN GRAYBEATON
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FOREWORD

Phantoms of Mars is the first adventure series for ***John Carter of Mars: Adventures on the Dying World of Barsoom***. It is a complete campaign arc in four parts. Each part can be played in order, or it can be interspersed with other adventures as part of a larger campaign.

The focus of ***Phantoms of Mars*** is a conspiracy that spans the entire world of Barsoom and threatens to devastate many of the civilizations and people that call the Red Planet home. The conspiracy is introduced and dealt with during the adventure series, but advice and guidance is provided to use the conspirators outside the scope of ***Phantoms of Mars*** and how to connect it to other antagonists in a campaign.

In addition to the adventures, there is a chapter that includes all the narrator characters used in all four adventures. These are collected in one place for ease of use, especially if narrators wish to use these characters outside of the confines of the adventures where they feature.

Power Level

Phantoms of Mars is aimed at a group of three to five player heroes that are relatively inexperienced and can be played with newly created characters. However, it can also be played using John Carter and his allies, or with additional or more experienced characters. In this case, narrators may occasionally wish to boost the adversaries to make them more of a challenge, either adding more threats to a scene or giving villains and other important characters extra talents and higher attributes. Narrators may also give themselves extra Threat if necessary to keep things challenging for a powerful or experienced group, but remember the role of the narrator is to challenge the players and their heroes, not crush them or thwart their efforts as a matter of course.

Using Carter and Companions

While ***Phantoms of Mars*** is designed primarily for players to use their own characters, playing as John Carter or other significant characters from the Burroughs novels is an option. In this case, players should use the character's entries in the *Champions of Barsoom* chapter in the core rulebook as a guideline but customize the character for their personal play style. Advice in how to change the events or encounters if players are taking the role of Carter and his cohorts is provided as necessary in the adventures.

Keeping it Moving

While the adventures in ***Phantoms of Mars*** are designed to flow smoothly between intrigue, exploration, travel, and combat, the reality is that no written adventure can match perfectly every group. Players and their heroes are too cunning, resourceful, and generally unpredictable to predict every possibly divergence, ploy, or plan they will concoct. In addition, different players possess different views of the genre, source material, and what makes a "true" Burroughsian tale of romance and adventure. Narrators can and should customize these adventures whenever necessary to best fit their group, especially if things start to slow down.

In fact, the best thing a narrator can usually do during these adventures is to keep the action moving and play flowing smoothly. If a scene is bogging down? Wrap it up. If a particular enemy or narrator character isn't appealing to the group? Write them out at the earliest opportunity. If the heroes need help so things don't grind to a halt? Provide them aid and work out the cost of such assistance later. In the end if you keep the action flowing, the intrigues flying, and the romance blossoming? You're more likely to have a great time than slavish following every word of this adventure series.

Using Threat and Momentum

During various parts of the adventures there will be recommendations on how the narrator can use Threat to cause additional problems for the heroes or facilitate interesting situations during play. Narrators should remember they are also examples, not the sole version uses of Threat possible during a scene. If another option seems reasonable or interesting? Feel free to include them.

Similarly, the adventures also include specific ways players can spend Momentum. These are usually scene dependent and designed to change play in an interesting way. However, like Threat, these are extra options and suggestions. They don't replace the normal uses of Momentum, and narrators should encourage their players to spend Momentum for their heroes in any way that enriches play.

Also in this Book

In addition to the ***Phantoms of Mars*** adventure series, this book contains the ***Swords of Mars*** 2d20 Skirmish miniatures rules. This modified and streamlined version of the 2d20 system is specifically designed for miniatures combat. It isn't required to enjoy or use the rest of this book. However, throughout the adventures, scenarios for ***Swords of Mars*** skirmish combats are presented. These can be used as part of the adventure or separate from them as desired.

With all that said, let's once again prepare to reach out across time and space to the world of Barsoom. Romance, peril, and adventure awaits on the Red Planet, so let's get started.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

This section contains statistics for the important characters in this adventure. Note that a character's status as a minion, monster, or villain speaks to their durability in a conflict, not necessarily their overall importance in the adventure. For example, Nalan Tir is a monster-class character because he is less durable than the player heroes in battle or other conflicts. However, he plays a very important role in the adventure as a whole.

The Power of Recurring Adversaries

The various enemies and threats in ***Phantoms of Mars*** are designed to be introduced in this adventure. Narrators do not have to introduce Pharen Cul or his Eidolon subordinates into the campaign before running ***Phantoms of Mars***, nor are they required to return to any enemies that manage to survive the events of these adventures. However, they may wish to.

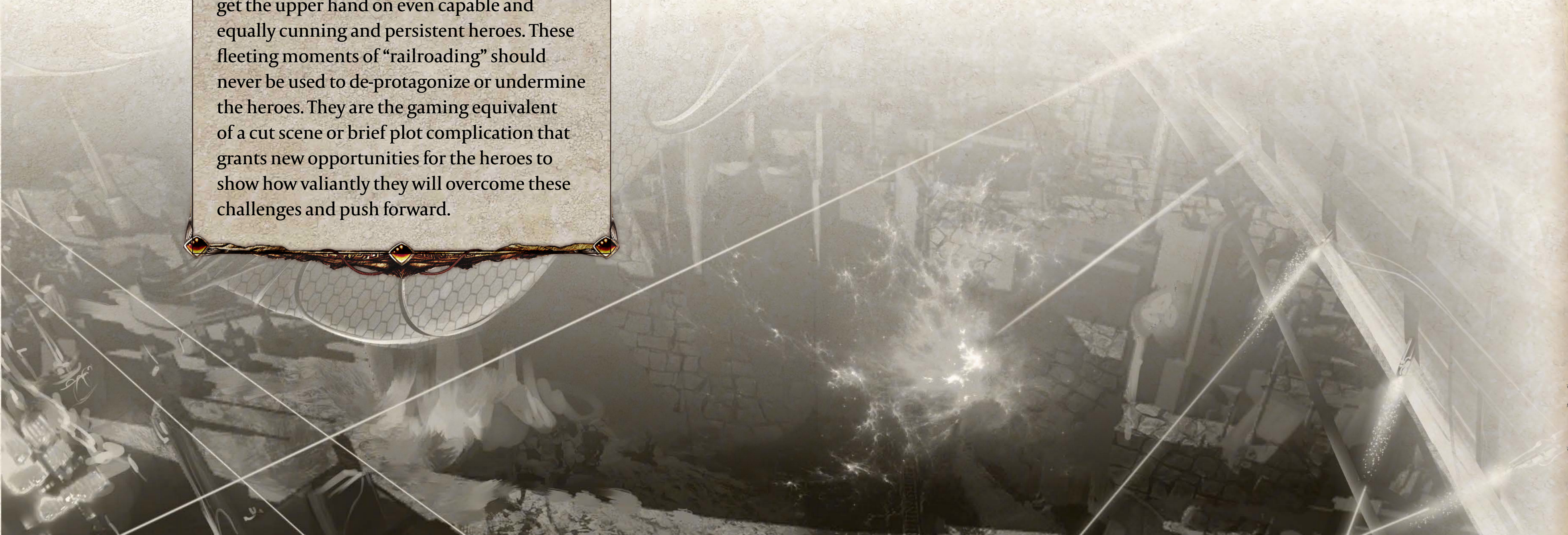
Recurring threats and adversaries are a staple of fiction. The enemy who returns again and again, until they are finally defeated in a dramatic conflict after several encounters, is a staple of many genres. Narrators who plan to run ***Phantoms of Mars*** may wish to introduce some of these enemies in advance. Perhaps a Thark hero has run afoul of Jaggs Kurgas, or an Okar hero has some connection to the mysterious Scoma. Former enemies and rivals in the campaign might appear now as members or allies of the Eidolon. Also, any threats that survive encounters with the heroes may rise to return, either as part of a reborn Eidolon cult or something else entirely. These tactics help tie ***Phantoms of Mars*** into an individual campaign, which can increase the players' investment and enjoyment.

Barsoom's Tiniest Railroad

Phantoms of Mars generally attempts to avoid the practice known as "railroading", where a group of heroes is set along a path they cannot easily or possibly diverge from. This is generally frowned upon in roleplaying games because it reduces player agency and choice and feels more like playing out scripted events than roleplaying your character through numerous scenarios and challenges.

However, there are a few times in these adventures when the heroes are trapped, captured, or otherwise pushed into a scenario lacking many alternatives. And in some cases they are definitely pushed towards conflicts with certain individuals or groups at certain times.

These scenes are sparsely applied and chosen because they invoke certain Burroughsian plot twists or planetary romance genre conventions. The conflicts promoted are chosen to move the adventures along or remind the heroes they face a cunning and persistent group of enemies who sometimes get the upper hand on even capable and equally cunning and persistent heroes. These fleeting moments of "railroading" should never be used to de-protagonize or undermine the heroes. They are the gaming equivalent of a cut scene or brief plot complication that grants new opportunities for the heroes to show how valiantly they will overcome these challenges and push forward.



ENEMIES

These characters are generally antagonistic toward the heroes.

EIDOLON AGENTS (MINION)

AGENTS OF THE EIDOLON CONSPIRACY

"We are the first among all. We will rise from the shadows to rule Barsoom."

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
6	6	4

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
4	6	4

TALENTS

FANATIC LOYALTY (GRADE 2)

You are devoted to your group's goals and cause, even under threat or pain of death.

- **Circumstance:** When serving your group.
- **Effect:** When protecting your organization's secrets or superiors, including resisting interrogation to inform on them, you gain a bonus d20. Also, if in Immediate range to a superior, you may take damage from an attack meant for them.

EQUIPMENT

- Harness
- Mask
- Pistol
- Sword
- Dagger

BACKGROUND

Hailing from many races across Barsoom, the Eidolon's ranks are a mix of former spies for the Holy Therns who converted to the Eidolon, panthans and mercenary spies and scouts, as well as the occasional true believer and zealot. Eidolon agents are trained to be ruthless and deadly, and many of them eschew traditional Barsoomian codes of combat to use any weapons at their disposal to destroy a foe. They are all excessively loyal, whether cowed, conditioned, or compensated, serving their superiors without question.

When operating for the Eidolon, most agents go masked. This not only serves to intimidate and confuse potential opponents, but it also helps agents hidden within various communities keep their true identities a secret. This entry assumes a red Martian agent, though it will work fine for most Martians as presented.

SPECIAL

The narrator may, during this adventure series, spend 2 Threat to have a minor narrator character reveal themselves to be an agent of the Eidolon. If the character does not already have statistics, use those for Eidolon Agents, adjusted for race and other factors as necessary. This can be done even with trusted and reoccurring characters; the individual was a sleeper agent or somehow blackmailed or brainwashed by the group. This cannot be used on player character allies.

ELITE EIDOLON GUARD (MONSTER)

CHOSEN WARRIORS OF THE EIDOLON

"Our swords are unmatched, our resolve unrivalled. Soon Barsoom will fall to us."

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
5	6	4

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
5	5	4

STRESS	MENACE
10	1

TALENTS

DEADLY RESOLVE (GRADE 2)

You fight harder and are even deadlier when under the command of a superior in your group.

- **Circumstance:** When serving under a villain among the Eidolon.
- **Effect:** Reduce all stress from attacks by 1 and roll an additional d20 when you serve under a villain directly. This talent is triggered both when a villain leads you into battle and when performing tasks directly related to a personal directive or special mission your masters directed you to accomplish.

FANATIC LOYALTY (GRADE 2)

You are devoted to your group's goals and cause, even under threat or pain of death.

- **Circumstance:** When serving your group.
- **Effect:** When protecting your organization's secrets or superiors, including resisting interrogation or charm to inform on them, you gain a bonus d20. Also, if in Immediate range to a superior, you may take damage from an attack meant for them.

EQUIPMENT

- Harness
- Mask
- Pistol
- Sword
- Short sword
- Dagger

BACKGROUND

Chosen from among the best and most loyal agents of the Eidolon, the elite guards are bodyguards, commandos, and special forces. Many are Thern soldiers personally loyal to Pharen Cul, though there are Martians from all across Barsoom among their numbers.

Elite Eidolon Guards mechanically occupy that fuzzy space between minion and monster. They are fragile for a true henchman and lack that adversarial type's typical individual flair and personality, but they are hardier and more skilled than a minion. Unique or exceptional Elite Eidolon Guards will possess greater menace, extra talents, and higher attributes. They can be created as needed by the narrator, perhaps serving to represent a heroes' acquaintance who secretly serves the enemy.

GELL MORAN (VILLAIN)

EIDOLON SPY AND MAJOR-DOMO OF LESSER HELIUM

"The evidence against you is quite unassailable, thus it matters little if you perish resisting arrest, or surrender to face just execution."

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
8	5	4

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
4	6	7

STRESS TRACKERS

CONFUSION	FEAR	INJURY
11	11	12

TALENTS

CUNNING ADVISOR (GRADE 2)

Your counsel is persuasive and keen.

- **Circumstance:** When advising or directing others.
- **Effect:** You may always use Cunning when advising or directing others and they gain 1 bonus Momentum when they act following your counsel.

BRILLIANT DECEIVER (GRADE 2)

You are a skilled and creative liar, able to spot lies in others as easily as you weave them about yourself.

- **Circumstance:** When deceiving or detecting deception.
- **Effect:** You may always use Reason in place of Empathy when engaging in or attempting to spot deception. You gain a d20 bonus to all such tests.

TREACHEROUS ULSIO (GRADE 3)

You strike quickly and without mercy, dispatching any who are unaware of your presence or your true nature.

- **Circumstance:** When striking from ambush, or betrayal.
- **Effect:** When striking from ambush, or when betraying someone who believes you a friend or ally, you do 2 additional 🎲 of damage and an when an effect is rolled on an attack it does 1 additional Confusion damage.

EQUIPMENT

- Harness
- Cloak
- Two pistols
- Two daggers
- Sword
- Chronometer

BACKGROUND

Gell Moran is a tall, thin, imperious red Martian with an aura of superior decadence about him at all times. He wears finer ornaments than others of his station, and indulges in vices with more abandon. He has been known, and disliked, among Lesser Helium's elite for years.

He is also a willing agent of the Eidolon plot, taking advantage of their mind-control techniques to rise rapidly through the ranks in Lesser Helium. With the conspiracy nearing its tipping point, he has struck boldly with his framing of the heroes. His prize, should the Eidolons succeed, is nothing less than ruling the Twin Cities of Helium and enjoying his pick of the spoils.

JAGGS KURGAS (MONSTER)

RENEGADE THARK ASSASSIN

"Honor is for fools and the dead."

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
6	7	4

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
7	5	5

STRESS	MENACE
11	4

TALENTS

HONORLESS KILLER (GRADE 3)

When you strike in a treacherous manner you drive the blade deep and leave your foes lifeless on the ground.

- **Circumstance:** When attacking dishonorably.
- **Effect:** When striking a target with a superior weapon from ambush, after a truce has been called, or in an otherwise dishonorable fashion, gain a bonus d20 and gain a bonus 2 🎲 of damage if the attack succeeds.

EXPERT SHOT (GRADE 3)

You are a master sniper, capable of scoring deadly hits at extreme range with ease.

- **Circumstance:** When using a firearm.
- **Effect:** Attacks with a firearm have a 2d20 bonus and do an additional 1 🎲 of damage.

FOUR-ARMED FOR WAR (GRADE 1)

Your warlike, combative culture and four arms give you an edge in combat, allowing you to attack with multiple weapons or steady your rifle with ease.

- **Circumstance:** When attacking with melee weapons or using a rifle.
- **Effect:** When you generate Momentum while attacking with a melee weapon or rifle, gain an extra Momentum.

EQUIPMENT

- Harness
- Rifle
- Pistol
- Two swords
- Two hatchets
- Dagger

BACKGROUND

A green Martian outcast who leads a renegade Thark band, Jaggs serves Pharen Cul and the Eidolon. Jaggs is one-eyed, a souvenir from the act of dishonor that made him an outcast among his people. Jaggs hates Tharks even more than other groups and races, which is saying something. Jaggs has been promised dominion over the green Martian hordes once the Eidolon conquer Barsoom, and he will do anything to ensure this comes to pass.

MALAGOR CREW (MINION)

CREW OF THE EIDOLON FLAGSHIP

"Run! Alert the guards!"

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
4	4	4

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
3	4	5

TALENTS

DISPOSABLE PAWN (GRADE 1)

Despite your efforts to remain safe and do your job, you, and others like you, often meet ignoble ends.

- **Circumstance:** When near a superior.
- **Effect:** If in Immediate range to a superior, you may take damage from an attack meant for them.

EQUIPMENT

- Harness
- Mask
- Dagger
- Tools and instruments

PAX PARKA (VILLAIN)

SECRETIVE MASTER ASSASSIN

"I am the deadliest killer you've never heard of."

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
6	8	5

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
4	6	5

STRESS TRACKERS

CONFUSION	FEAR	INJURY
10	14	10

TALENTS

DARING ASSASSIN (GRADE 3)

You are one of the greatest killers on Barsoom, able to locate and eliminate targets that frustrate others of your trade.

- **Circumstance:** Finding and eliminating your target.
- **Effect:** Spend 1 Momentum and name a target. You may always use Daring in actions to track or attack that target and such tests receive a bonus 2d20.

FINISH THEM (GRADE 3)

Few survive your first attack, none survive your next.

- **Circumstance:** Attacking a foe you've already damaged this scene.
- **Effect:** When physically attacking a target you've already dealt Injury stress to, deal an additional 3⬢ of damage.

PAY FOR PASSAGE (GRADE 2)

You are a ferryman on the River Iss, ushering so many souls to their end.

- **Circumstance:** When taking an assassination contract.
- **Effect:** When taking a contract, your employer may pay up to 3 Momentum as part of your compensation. You gain 2 Momentum for every one paid by your employer to use while performing your contract. Narrators may spend Threat in place of Momentum on behalf of narrator characters who contract your services.

EQUIPMENT:

- Harness
- Cloak
- Dagger
- Short sword
- Sword
- Pistol
- Rifle

BACKGROUND

Pax Parka would be one of the most infamous and renowned assassins on Barsoom, were he not so good at what he does. He has slain over a hundred Martians of all races, but set up the circumstances so that none seemed anything other than death by virtuous combat or misadventure. His appearance is almost uncannily average. He is not taller, nor broader, nor otherwise distinctive in any way.

In terms of the Eidolon, Pax Parka is in this for the treasure. He has been paid to kill the heroes, and he will attempt to perform that job. He has no opinions about the fate of larger things and is not loyal follower of the Eidolon cause. Despite this, once he is introduced, he may later appear to attack the heroes or eliminate high-value targets on the Eidolon's behalf. In such cases, narrators can pay 6 Threat to have Pax Parka appear in scenes he could reasonably join. He may perform these additional tasks for pay or to repair any stain on his reputation caused by the player heroes thwarting his attempt to eliminate them.

PHAREN CUL (VILLAIN)

LEADER OF THE EIDOLON AND FORMER THERN SPYMASTER

"I am the first among champions. My army of shadows will change the face of Barsoom, and all will bow before my will!"

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
8	7	4

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
5	5	6

STRESS TRACKERS

CONFUSION	FEAR	INJURY
10	12	13

TALENTS

DEADLY COMBATANT (GRADE 4)

With blade or pistol in hand, you are among the deadliest people on Barsoom.

- **Circumstance:** In physical conflicts.
- **Effect:** All physical attacks you perform gain two bonus Momentum. This must be spent during the attack, either on the attack roll, or to add additional damage.

MASTER MANIPULATOR (GRADE 5)

Others are puppets to bend to your will, even your loyal allies exist primarily to serve your interests.

- **Circumstance:** When manipulating others.
- **Effect:** You gain a 2d20 bonus to coerce, deceive, or manipulate others—this includes brainwashing others or trying to otherwise break their will. In addition, you may transfer stress you just suffered to an ally or subordinate who is near enough to take the hit (Immediate range for physical attacks, further for social and mental conflicts). Minions can absorb 1 stress in this manner, but you may sacrifice several to do so if necessary. Any attacks you perform that cause Fear or Confusion do an additional 1 🎲 of damage.

THERN SPYMASTER (GRADE 3)

Though you no longer serve the Therns, the skills and agents you developed during those days still serve you well.

- **Circumstance:** When dealing with matters of intrigue.
- **Effect:** Lower all difficulties involving espionage and covert tactics by 1. In addition, you may spend Momentum to reveal you have a spy or agent in a group or organization. You may have a spy in a city or nation for free, within an army or similarly sized group for 1 Momentum; within a noble family, guild, or similar group for 2 Momentum; or within a secret society or close-knit inner circle for 3 Momentum. Note that not all spies serve you willingly. Some are blackmailed or brainwashed to serve you.

EQUIPMENT

- Harness
- Mask
- Dagger
- Short sword
- Sword
- Pistol
- Numerous hidden weapons and tools

BACKGROUND

Once a master spy, assassin, and tactician serving under Matai Shang, the Holy Hekkador of the white-skinned Therns, Cul eventually broke ties with his master and sought to forge his own path. Losing faith in the Thern holy tenets and way of life, Cul came to believe it was will and ambition that made Martians superior, not their race. While some would take this belief and forge an admirable ideology from it, Cul's deep-seated cruelty and callous nature caused him to develop a disdain for all but ruthlessness and power. He formed a corps of loyal followers, mostly taken from his vast network of agents during his time serving the Therns. He then began to search for methods of dominating and conquering Barsoom with his relatively small but motivated and well-connected "army of shadows." It has taken him centuries of planning, but he believes the Dominator Ray and his current strategy will lead to planetwide coups and revolts that must eventually place him as the new Jeddak of all Barsoom, and Hekkador of a new faith which worships him as a living god.

Cul is brilliant, capable, and yet also megalomaniacal and somewhat mad. He believes he is destined to rule Barsoom and will tolerate no threats to his grand ambition. However, Cul is no fool—he favors domination, control, and subterfuge to open warfare. One of the great duelists and assassins among the Therns, Cul is deadly in personal combat.

RED GUARDS (MINION)

RED MARTIAN GUARDS

"We fight for the honor and glory of our jeddak!"

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
4	6	5

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
5	5	4

TALENTS

LOYAL UNTO DEATH (GRADE 2)

You serve your jed and jeddak with pride and courage, unwavering in your devotion and loyalty.

- **Circumstance:** When following orders.
- **Effect:** When following an order that comes from your jed or jeddak, or which you believe comes from them, you gain a bonus d20 on any actions relating to that order. This includes defending yourself from characters seeking to prevent you from doing your duty.

EQUIPMENT

- Harness
- Cloak
- Dagger
- Short sword
- Sword
- Pistol

BACKGROUND

These red Martian guardsmen are representative of many armed and trained watchmen, guards, and soldiers who serve in Lesser Helium or elsewhere. Many are noble and loyal, though some may be corrupted by sinister forces. Officers in the guard, often leading bands of warriors on patrol or in battle, are treated as monster-class adversaries with stress 10 and menace 2, but otherwise the same statistics.

SCOMA, EIDOLON COMMANDER (VILLAIN)

LADY OF A THOUSAND GUISES

"I'm sure I'll be able to gain access to that area. I have just the outfit."

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
7	6	5

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
4	7	6

STRESS TRACKERS

CONFUSION	FEAR	INJURY
11	13	11

TALENTS

EXPLOIT OPENING (GRADE 3)

When you see an opening in combat, you strike decisively and with deadly force.

- **Circumstance:** When Counterstriking, ambushing, or striking an opponent who suffers an affliction in this conflict.
- **Effect:** When you Counterstrike, or are striking an opponent who suffers an affliction in this conflict, you roll a bonus 3🎲 of damage. You gain the same bonus when ambushing a target unaware of your presence or true identity.

THOUSAND GUISES (GRADE 2)

You are a mistress of disguise.

- **Circumstance:** When disguising yourself.
- **Effect:** When trying to disguise yourself, you lower all difficulties to impersonate an individual or achieve a certain appearance by 1. You also gain 2d20 bonus dice for all disguise-related tests and may spend 2 Momentum to join a scene you are not in by replacing a minion in that scene. You may use this ability to spy on a scene without revealing yourself, though once you spend the Momentum, it is possible for other characters to see through your disguise.

QUICK EXIT (GRADE 2)

Using misdirection and speed, you can quickly remove yourself from harm's way.

- **Circumstance:** When trying to flee a scene.
- **Effect:** When you are attempting to flee a scene, evade capture, or otherwise separate yourself from others, you can move one additional range category and avoid all environmental and scene hazards.

EQUIPMENT

- Harness
- Disguise kit
- Sword
- Shortsword
- Two daggers
- Two pistols

BACKGROUND

Scoma is a highly trained Okar assassin and spy. She used to work for the infamous Salensus Oll, Jeddak of the Okar, until she left his service for undefined reasons. Scoma is a mistress of disguise, often taking disguises far from her normal appearance. She has cover identities in many major cities and settlements, allowing her to help spy on them for the Eidolon.

Scoma is treacherous, passionate, and quick-witted. She prefers elaborate guises and misdirection, but is more than capable of direct action when called for. She is often used by Pharen Cul and the Eidolon to steal, kidnap, or sabotage targets, as she can slip in unnoticed and be gone before anyone realizes she was even there.

THARK OUTCASTS (MINION)

RENEGADE GREEN MARTIANS

"The horde rejected us, now we reject the horde!"

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
5	5	3

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
6	5	4

TALENTS

THARK WARRIOR (GRADE 2)

You are skilled with the tools of war used by your horde.

- **Circumstance:** When using native weapons
- **Effect:** Gain a bonus d20 when using Thark-made rifles, spears, and blades.

FOUR-ARMED FOR WAR (GRADE 1)

Your warlike, combative culture and four arms give you an edge in combat, allowing you to attack with multiple weapons or steady your rifle with ease.

- **Circumstance:** When attacking with melee weapons or using a rifle.
- **Effect:** When you generate Momentum while attacking with a melee weapon or rifle, gain an extra Momentum.

EQUIPMENT

- Harness
- Rifle
- Sword,
- Hatchet

TOMOR ZHEN, EIDOLON SPY (MONSTER)

EIDOLON SPY

"I have ways of making you do what I want you to."

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
7	5	4

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
3	5	6

STRESS	MENACE
10	3

TALENTS

CUNNING SPYCRAFT (GRADE 2)

You are a skilled and exceptional spy, misleading or fooling even great leaders and vigilant guardsmen.

- **Circumstance:** When infiltrating or spying.
- **Effect:** You can always use your Cunning with actions related to spying, disguise, and other acts of espionage. For 2 Momentum, you may join the next scene in disguise as a member of an important narrator character's retinue or staff.

TWIN FANGS (GRADE 4)

You are skilled with using two blades to create a twin whirlwind of peril for your opponents.

- **Circumstance:** When using two blades of equal length.
- **Effect:** When using two blades of equal length (two daggers, two short swords, etc.) you gain a bonus d20 to attack and defend actions. You may also always attack or defend with Cunning when using these weapons.

BACKGROUND

Tomor Zhen is an arrogant and confident Thern, previously of the Eighth Circle. He has always been a spy in the outer world, most notably in Greater Helium, where he successfully ingrained himself into the personal retinue of Tardos Mors. There, he was able to learn many of the great Jeddak's plans, and was not slow in forwarding to them his superiors in the Valley Dor.

Working under Pharen Cul during the mastermind's time with the Holy Therns, Zhen was a natural recruit for Cul's heretical Eidolon conspiracy. Tomor could see the value in their plan and sided with the new cult without hesitation. He continued in his role as a spy, only changing to whom he reported.

During an official visit to the city of Kaol, Tomor became interested in the beautiful Thalia Dahl during a banquet held in Kulan Tith's palace. He became even more intrigued when he discovered her resistance to the Eidolon's various forms of coercion and brainwashing. He has imprisoned her in Kaol while he attempts to convince Pharen Cul to give him the noblewoman as a slave. Cul is currently holding the possibility over his spy's head to encourage his loyalty and further devotion to the cause, but the cruel master of the Eidolon is likely to acquiesce soon—he has no other use for a red Martian princess he cannot dominate with his infernal machines.

Tomor Zhen is a handsome Thern male, strong of build and proud of carriage. He is particularly proud of a blonde wig and various other hairpieces he uses when disguised, keeping them in immaculate condition. He is an excellent swordsman, favouring an unusual style using two blades of equal length, from daggers to longswords. Despite his abilities, at heart, Tomor is a coward and a bully. He will flee a combat before losing his life, and then swear eternal vengeance on those who threatened him.

FRIENDS

These characters are friendly, or at least not overly hostile or violent toward the heroes.

A TRUE VILLAIN

Narrators wishing Joran Tai to play a larger role in the adventure or who wish to portray him as a future threat temporarily allied with the heroes should consider making the Thern agent a villain-class character. To do so, raise his Cunning to 8 and increase the grade and ⬢ of their Shocking Revelation talent by 1. As a villain Tai will still assist the heroes against Pharen Cul and the Eidolon, but he is more likely to seek secrets and advantages against the heroes to use at a later date. He may even betray them at the very end of the adventure, seeking to dispose of them once they have destroyed their mutual enemy.

JORAN TAI (MONSTER)

AGENT OF THE HOLY THERNS

"Desperate situations call for strange allies."

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
7	6	6
MIGHT	**PASSION**	**REASON**
4	4	6

STRESS	MENACE
11	3

TALENTS

MASTER SPY (GRADE 2)

You are a skilled spy, among your people's best agents.

- **Circumstance:** When performing acts of espionage.
- **Effect:** You roll a bonus 2d20 when performing acts of espionage.

SHOCKING REVELATION (GRADE 2)

You are adept at throwing others off, revealing information at just the right time to distract them and weaken their resolve.

- **Circumstance:** When making social-based attacks.
- **Effect:** When making a social-based attack, do an extra 1 ⬢ of damage. If you are revealing vital information or secrets as part of this attack, it gains the Psychic quality. Attacks that already have Psychic gain an additional 1 ⬢ of damage.

DRAMATIC APPEARANCE (GRADE 2)

You always seem to appear and disappear at the most appropriate times.

- **Circumstance:** When entering or exiting a scene.
- **Effect:** You may enter or exit any scene for 1 Momentum provided it is feasible you could join or leave the scene under your own power. This talent requires a movement action to use.

EQUIPMENT

- Harness
- Cloak
- Two pistols
- Two daggers
- Shortsword
- Chronometer

BACKGROUND

Charged by his superiors among the Holy Therns to seek allies against the Eidolon, Joran Tai lacks none of his people's usual arrogance and ruthlessness. However, unlike some other white Martians, Joran is adept at hiding the bulk of his contempt for "lesser races" if it means completing his mission. This is not because he has any additional respect or love for other cultures, but because he hates the Eidolon and is devoted to their destruction.

The exact nature of Joran Tai's hatred for the Eidolon depends on how sympathetic the narrator wishes to make this otherwise unlikable Thern spy. If a sympathetic Joran is desired, he hates Pharen Cul for killing his lover, another skilled spy and loyal Thern, when the villain fled the Therns. If a less sympathetic Joran is the goal, he resents Cul and the Eidolon for daring to challenge the glory of the Holy Therns and their way of life.

KOPOR RUH, CAL THORIS, AND MACS DORSOM (MONSTERS)

WITNESSES ON THE RUN

"I wish I had not seen what I did. I wish I knew nothing of these conspiracies and atrocities!"

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
3	5	4

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
4	5	4

STRESS	MENACE
8	1

EQUIPMENT

- Harness
- Dagger
- Short sword

All three of these characters are "typical" red Martians, unique mostly in that they are the only three living Martians to witness the treacherous Gell Moran meet with his Eidolon masters in Part 2: Traitors and Fugitives. *Skilled enough in combat to not lose honor, but not fit to stand beside the heroes or Mors Kajak's bodyguard. All three are afraid for their lives as they watch events unfold around them. However, they are red Martians. A skilled enough appeal to their patriotism, loyalty, and valor will convince each to step forward and tell the jed what they know. They are hardy enough to survive an attack or two, but a single affliction or serious damage will silence them forever. By default, these characters have no talents, but narrators who wish to use these characters more frequently or distinguish them from each other should feel free to add talents and otherwise customize them.*

NALAN TIR (MONSTER)

BRILLIANT NEUROSCIENTIST AND HISTORIAN

"This information is fascinating. I must have more time to study it..."

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
4	5	6

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
4	6	8

STRESS	MENACE
12	2

TALENTS

MAN OF REASON (GRADE 1)

Your devotion to logic and reason is your most valuable defense against coercion and persuasion.

- **Circumstance:** Social conflicts.
- **Effect:** You may always defend with Reason against any social-based attack.

SKILLED NEUROSCIENTIST (GRADE 4)

You are one of the world's leading experts on the Martian brain, neuroscience, and ancient mind-altering and repairing techniques.

- **Circumstance:** With scientific matters involving the nerves and brain.
- **Effect:** When dealing with scientific matters involving the nerves and brain, including ancient Barsoomian methods of psycho-surgery and mind alteration, you gain a 3d20 bonus. If you have access to your lab or sufficient medical equipment, you can heal any afflictions caused by nerve damage or brain damage automatically.

EQUIPMENT

- Harness
- Dagger
- Bag filled with notes and various scientific instruments
- Journal

BACKGROUND

Aging and somewhat eccentric, Nalan Tir is nevertheless a brilliant scholar, healer, and historian. His primary focus is on ancient technology and techniques relating to neuroscience and medicine. He lost his own wife to a traumatic brain injury that he could not cure and he hopes the secret to eliminating such tragedies lies in the wisdom of the past.

Tir enjoys the solitude his research provides, though he loves his twin children, Tira and Tirol, dearly. Despite his cantankerous nature, Tir is exceptionally kind and moral, refusing to use the ancient secrets he has learned to harm others. Nalan Tir is not useless in a fight—after all, he has survived life on Barsoom for centuries—but he is not a soldier and often relies on others to defend him when his research takes him to hostile places.

Nalan Tir is an aging red Martian of average height and slim build. His hair has turned to white over the centuries and the signs of age are beginning to show on his face. He is rarely without his small case of tools and instruments and his journal, where he records his theories and findings.

THALIA DAHL (MONSTER)

PRINCESS OF KAOL

"I would rather marry a calot than be subjected to such an indignity."

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
4	5	6

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
4	7	5

STRESS	MENACE
11	2

TALENTS

PASSIONATE NOBLE (GRADE 5)

Your strong will and passion helps shield you from life's indignities, allowing you to retain composure even in the face of great adversity.

- **Circumstance:** When intimidated or threatened.
- **Effect:** You may always defend with your Passion against attempts to threaten, intimidate, or otherwise coerce you. You may also automatically ignore or remove an affliction caused by fear, intimidation, or coercion, once per scene.

BACKGROUND

Young and proud, Thalia Dahl is the daughter of Dahlan Vors, a chieftain who owes his fealty to Kulan Tith. She has no other siblings, and as such, has been rather spoiled by her parents, which does not seem to have affected her negatively except for a certain level of prideful haughtiness. She is known throughout Kaol as a great beauty, and some would say her looks rival those of the incomparable Dejah Thoris herself. Her beauty has drawn the attentions of several eligible chieftains and jeds, who hope to win her affections. Thalia has, thus far, shown no interest in any of them.

Despite her spoiled upbringing, Thalia Dahl is a kind and gentle woman. She is deeply honorable, and a strict follower of all red Martian traditions. She has a great love for her family. She rarely has a harsh word to say to anybody, unless they insult or slight her, and then her disdain and sharp tongue will soon put any person back in their place. She meets the heroes when she has been imprisoned and is awaiting execution for refusing to bow to the Eidolon.

Like all Martian nobility, Thalia Dahl has learned the basics of self-defense, but she is, by her own admission, no soldier.

Thalia Dahl is a fit and devastatingly beautiful red Martian woman. Her figure is almost boyish, and she wears her long, black hair decorated with jewels and precious metals, styled in the high coif favoured by noble red women throughout Barsoom.

TIRA NAL (MONSTER)

DEVOTED DAUGHTER

“I can protect my family, thank you. However, it would be foolish to refuse help."

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
5	6	4

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
5	5	6

STRESS	MENACE
10	2

TALENTS

FAMILY FIRST (GRADE 2)

You are devoted to your family and will do anything to support or protect them, especially your father.

- **Circumstance:** When protecting your family.
- **Effect:** Gain a d20 bonus when acting to support, assist, or protect a member of your family. Also, if standing within Immediate range of a family member who is successfully attacked, you may suffer damage meant for them (Spend 1 Momentum to use this ability from Near range).

METICULOUS (GRADE 2)

Measure twice, cut once.

- **Circumstance:** Taking time.
- **Effect:** When performing an action, you may take an extra turn to make sure you get it all right. If you do, double any Momentum gains from it.

SCIENTIFIC TRAINING (GRADE 1)

You were trained by your father in the ways of Barsoomian science. Though you lack his experience and expertise, you're a capable researcher and student.

- **Circumstance:** Scientific research and study.
- **Effect:** You gain a bonus d20 when dealing with scientific research and study.

EQUIPMENT

- Harness
- Pistol
- Sword
- Dagger

BACKGROUND

Twin sister of Tirol Nal and daughter of Nalan Tir, Tira is her father's chief research assistant and, when necessary, bodyguard. Tira lacks her father's passion for science, but she is meticulous and attentive.

Tira is an attractive, fit, young red Martian woman with long, dark hair worn in jeweled braids. She is very protective of her father, though she does not share his love of solitude and will gladly socialize when opportunities present themselves. She is older than her brother by a few minutes, hatching shortly before his own emergence. She loves to tease Tirol, saying this means she is more mature and worldly.

Tirol Nal (Monster)

ROGUISH SON

"I'm sure I can scrounge up something, just let me finish my drink."

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
6	6	5

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
4	6	5

STRESS	MENACE
10	2

TALENTS

DARING SCOUT (GRADE 2)

You are skilled at scouting and navigating dangerous territory.

- **Circumstance:** When scouting an area.
- **Effect:** You may always use Daring, and gain a bonus d20 in any action relating to scouting or navigation.

I CAN GET THAT (GRADE 2)

You are skilled at scavenging, haggling, and otherwise locating necessary or unusual equipment.

- **Circumstance:** When acquiring resources and equipment.
- **Effect:** You can leave a scene and return later with equipment or resources and a story of how you acquired it. This talent allows you to procure basic weapons (sword, pistol, etc.), clothing, tools, and medicines. Larger or rarer items such as fliers require spending Momentum. A narrator may tell you a resource cannot be found, but they must give you a Momentum when they do. You cannot use this talent during a conflict.

SCIENTIFIC TRAINING (GRADE 1)

You were trained by your father in the ways of Barsoomian science. Though you lack his experience and expertise, you're a capable researcher and student.

- **Circumstance:** Scientific research and study.
- **Effect:** You gain a bonus d20 when dealing with scientific research and study.

EQUIPMENT

- Harness
- Rifle
- Pistol
- Short sword
- Dagger

BACKGROUND

Twin brother of Tira Nal and son of Nalan Tir, Tirol acts as his father's scout and procurer on his expeditions, as well as assisting with research when his sister is otherwise occupied. Tirol has a bright mind and could be more academically talented than his sister, but he generally avoids applying himself, if possible.

Tirol is a good-looking, slender but well-muscled, young red Martian man with shaggy black hair and laid-back demeanor. He is talented, but outwardly unambitious. However, he is keen to advance his station and his family's status, and is often pushing his father to find new and notable ways to apply the knowledge they acquire during his research.

Note that while Nalan Tir dotes on his children in his own absent-minded way and they certainly have their flaws, they are fully-grown and capable adults — even if Tirol is at times a bit immature.

Hidden Depths

The talents or attributes for the traitorous twin are not exactly as they appear in their entry. Such character has +1 Cunning, -1 Empathy and the following talents in addition to those listed. They also become a villain instead of a monster for purposes of stress and damage.

IN ADDITION:

If Tira is the traitor, her Family First talent becomes ironically titled, applied when trying to deceive or exploit a family member. She can force a family member to take damage meant for her, not the other way around (this cannot be used at Near range by spending Momentum).

If Tirol is the traitor, his Daring Scout changes to Cunning Scout and uses Cunning instead of Daring. It also provides the same d20 bonus when ambushing, setting traps, or leading others into a trap.

Narrators may add extra talents to the traitor to make them more capable at their discretion.

BEASTS

This section details various beasts that appear in the adventure. In some cases, such as with the mind-controlled beasts of the Eidolon, their statistics are somewhat different than those in core rulebook (see ***John Carter of Mars*** *core book, Chapter 13: Beasts of Barsoom*).

BLUE GIBBON (MINION)

MISCHIEVOUS FOREST PRIMATES NATIVE TO THE FORESTS OF KAOL

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
5	5	4
MIGHT	**PASSION**	**REASON**
6	3	3

TALENTS

PRANKSTERS AND THIEVES

When taking nonviolent action to steal from, harass, or frustrate a target, blue gibbons roll a bonus d20.

SONAR SENSE

Blue gibbons reroll any one die in a test involving detecting danger or listening.

AT HOME AMONG THE TREES.

Blue gibbons reduce the difficulty by 1 of all tests related to climbing, swinging from branches, hiding in treetops, and otherwise moving and operating above the forest floor.

BACKGROUND

Blue gibbons are distant relatives of the great white apes of Barsoom. Similar in appearance, they are the size of a Jasoomian chimpanzee. Their hairless bodies are azure-blue in colour. Their four long arms aid them in their agile and energetic brachiating. Their expressive ape-like faces are almost comical in appearance, and the shock of blue hair on the crowns of their heads add to their amusing appearance. They sport a pair of large goblin-like ears high on their heads which are constantly twitching and moving as they listen to their surroundings.

Blue gibbons are always found in troops led by a large dominant male. The remainder of the troop will consist almost equally of females and subordinate males. Blue gibbons are highly intelligent and curious creatures. Their communication is complex, consisting of both verbal and mental components. While some believe that blue gibbons use language, no one has been able to translate their calls successfully.

This intelligence leads blue gibbons to be mischievous pranksters who take great delight in tormenting whoever or whatever takes their fancy. While this lighthearted nature may lead some to construe that blue gibbons are harmless creatures, they can be extremely dangerous if threatened, particularly the males who will take it upon themselves to protect the troop. Blue gibbons are usually minions (as are all creatures encountered in this adventure), but the occasional alpha or troop defender might be a monster-class adversary with a menace of 1 or 2.

MIND-CONTROLLED BEASTS

Broken and dominated by the Eidolon's fledgling mind-control process, these deadly creatures have been driven nearly mad and exist only to serve their new masters. Each banth or calot has a small control disk implanted at the base of their neck between their shoulder blades; the device erodes the creature's will and instinct and compels them to obey. These beasts are a bit slower and less coordinated than their wild cousins individually, but the control process renders them even more aggressive in combat and allows them to move in deadly packs with great effectiveness.

Anyone examining one of the control disks can make a **Reason + Cunning** (D2) test. Success reveals the disk works by interfacing with the brain and nervous system and encouraging certain impulses and blocking others. Obedience and subservience is rewarded while questioning and resistance causes loss of motor control and pain. For 2 Momentum, a character can discover this process will not work on intelligent beings as a method of control since they can more actively resist or hide various impulses.

MIND-CONTROLLED APT (MONSTER)

SAVAGE CARNIVORE OF THE NORTHERN POLE TURNED INTO A MIND-CONTROLLED SLAVE OF THE EIDOLON

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
4	5	3

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
8	4	2

STRESS	MENACE
10	3

TALENTS

PREDATOR

Apts deal 3 🎲 basic damage and their attacks are Fearsome.

RESILIENT

Apts gain a bonus d20 to avoid environmental dangers and traps.

UNIQUE EYES

Apts suffer no penalties from bright light or darkness.

MIND-CONTROLLED BANTHS (MONSTER)

DEADLY MULTI-LEGGED "LION" OF BARSOOM DRIVEN TO SERVE ITS EIDOLON MASTERS

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
6	7	4

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
9	4	3

STRESS	MENACE
11	2

TALENTS

APEX PREDATOR

The banth can use its **Cunning + Might** for any attack or defense. If successful on an attack it deals 3 🎲 basic damage.

FLURRY OF CLAWS

If successful on a defense, the banth automatically Counterstrikes dealing 2 🎲 on a successful Counterstrike.

SILENT OBEDIENCE

Mind-controlled banths are already dominated by their masters and cannot be controlled or communicated with, even by individuals who usually possesses this ability. They also do not roar, an unsettling factor for those familiar with the beasts' normal behavior—a **Reason + Empathy** (D2) test will reveal this fact, (D3) or more if the character has no personal experience with banths.

MIND-CONTROLLED CALOTS (MINION)

MARTIAN HOUNDS TURNED INTO DRONE PACKS BY THE NEFARIOUS EIDOLON

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
4	7	5

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
6	4	4

TALENTS

INCREDIBLE SPEED

The calot can move faster than any other Martian beast. If in a direct race with another animal it will win that race, unless tricked in some fashion. However, mind-controlled calots are sluggish by comparison with their non-dominated counterparts—they will always lose to another free calot.

TRACKER

Reduce difficulties of all tests to follow and detect prey by 1. All such tests also receive a bonus d20.

VICIOUS BITE

Calots deal 2 🎲 basic damage when they bite.

SHAKE IT OFF

If a calot is dispatched it can roll 1 🎲, on an effect it is not harmed and spends a Conflict action shaking off the damage.

MIND-CONTROLLED SITH (MONSTER)

GIANT AND VENOMOUS, THESE FLYING INSECTS ARE NATIVE TO THE FORESTS AROUND KAOL

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
5	6	3

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
6	4	1

STRESS	MENACE
7	2

TALENTS

FLY

The sith can fly, and is immune to falling.

TAIL STING

Tail Sting deals 4 🎲 basic damage to characters and the target must make an immediate **Might** + **Reason** (D3) test, or suffer an immediate Injury affliction.

HORRIFIC BUZZING

In the first round of combat the sith can make an **Empathy** + **Passion** attribute test, without the use of an action, against all opponents close enough to hear their buzzing (usually Near range or better). This attack inflicts 3 🎲 Fear damage.

BLOCKING THE SIGNAL

A particularly intelligent scientist or engineer might be able to rig a jamming device to disrupt the signal that controls the mind-controlled beasts the Eidolon uses. This would be a Dire (D4) test using **Reason** + **Empathy** as the default attributes, though clever players might justify other combinations. If successful, the character can craft a jamming device that will give all mind-controlled beasts in a scene +1 difficulty on all actions for three turns. For 2 Momentum, the duration of the effect can be extended to the entire scene, or the difficulty penalty can be raised by 1. Multiple effects are possible, so for 4 Momentum a device that imposes a +2 difficulty penalty can also effect the entire scene.

OTHER DOMINATED BEASTS

Narrators may wish to add other beasts to the Eidolon's collection of dominated Barsoomian fauna. Arboks and orluks are excellent options, though dominated Martian spiders add an element of additional crawling horror. When designing a new dominated beast, narrators should lower the Reason and Cunning of the creature by 1 and raise their Might by 1. Dominated beasts are simpler, but the process makes them more likely to throw themselves violently at their foes. Any talents which require exceptional personal initiative or suggest a higher intelligence should be eliminated or replaced. For example, mind-controlled banths lack the higher functions to realize their roars terrify prey, so mind-controlled banths possess the Silent Obedience talent instead.

Beasts the Eidolon has broken and dominated can come from anywhere on Barsoom. The conspiracy's reach is long and they've had ample time to locate and condition any number of creatures. The exception to this is the plant men. As yet, the Eidolon cannot dominate these bizarre creatures, likely because what minds they possess lack any animal or human component.

TREE BANTH (MONSTER)

ATTRIBUTES

DARING	CUNNING	EMPATHY
7	7	4

MIGHT	PASSION	REASON
6	4	4

STRESS	MENACE
11	2

TALENTS

TOP HUNTER IN THE FOREST.

The banth can use its **Cunning** + **Daring** for any attack or defense. If successful on an attack, it deals 2 🎲 basic damage. Also, reduce all difficulties to stalk prey or avoid detection in forest environments by 1.

FLURRY OF CLAWS

If successful on a defense, the banth automatically Counterstrikes, dealing 2 🎲 on a successful attack.

UNSETTLING

The tree banth's eerie yowl and relentless pursuit of prey causes many targets to recoil in fear. The banth makes a **Cunning** + **Daring** test, inflicting 2 🎲 Fear damage on any target facing it, either in direct combat or being ambushed or stalked by the beast. **Cunning** + **Reason** is a common test used to defend against this effect.

BACKGROUND

The Tree Banth is a ten-legged arboreal relative of the common banth found in the foothills surrounding the dead seas of Barsoom. They have a feline appearance, but of a sleeker and smaller build to that of the common banth (they are only slightly larger than a calot). Like their relatives, they have green protuberant eyes, hairless bodies, and a short bristly red mane (the male's mane being fuller than the female's). Their long jaws contain two rows of needle-like teeth, and their paws are prehensile to aid in their arboreal lifestyle. Their skin is coloured a deep purple, interspersed with bright red tiger-stripes.

Tree Banths are completely at home in the trees, and were once commonly found wherever thick forests grew on Barsoom. Today, they are rare, and only found in the Kaolian Forest. Their colouration acts as excellent camouflage in the multihued forest, and they are able to move silently on their heavily padded prehensile paws. They are able to leap and climb with great power and accuracy, allowing them to use the trees to their advantage when hunting or attacking prey.

Tree Banths also come in a minion version and they can vary in menace from 1 to 3. However, the beasts encountered in this adventure use the statistics provided.

THE ADVENTURE

CHAPTER 1:
IN THE SHADOWS OF KORVAS

CHAPTER 2:
TRAITORS AND FUGITIVES

CHAPTER 3:
RAIDERS OF KAOL

CHAPTER 4:
SPECTERS OF THE MIND

PART 1: IN THE SHADOWS OF KORVAS

In the Shadows of Korvas is the first part of an epic four-part adventure for ***John Carter of Mars***. In this adventure, the heroes will be introduced to a secret conspiracy within Barsoom, the Eidolon. Founded by a heretical Holy Thern, the Eidolon seeks to use ancient science to dominate those in power and rule through them.

A Brief History of the Eidolon

Pharen Cul was once a spymaster for the Holy Therns, serving under the great Holy Hekkador, Matai Shang himself, to keep the Therns informed of machinations by lesser beings and help maintain Thern control through their fabricated religion. However, Pharen's own faith wavered. He rejected the goddess Issus and the ways of the Therns. Instead, he came to believe that one could become a god by forcing others to worship and serve. He left the Therns and founded his own secret order, the Eidolon.

While charismatic, Cul knew he lacked the raw appeal or presence to unify Barsoom or convince the peoples of the dying planet to accept him as their god-king. So, instead, he turned to science, seeking ancient methods of brainwashing, conditioning, and control. Cul's early attempts were successful but crude. He learned to control animals and how to strengthen the fanaticism of the already loyal, but lacked a way to force an antagonistic or even neutral mind to obey.

It was then that an agent of the Eidolon brought the expertise of the famed scholar and scientist Nalan Tir to Cul's attention. If Tir himself could not perfect Cul's process to give him mastery over the people of Barsoom then he would know how it could be done. When he learned the scientist was preparing an expedition into the wilds of Barsoom, he knew it was time to strike.

It is here this adventure begins, with agents of the Eidolon seeking to seize Nalan Tir…

Where it all Begins

The adventure begins on the outskirts of Lesser Helium. Nalan Tir, an esteemed authority on ancient Barsoomian neuroscience and medicine, is preparing for another expedition. Tir is seeking methods of reversing or repairing severe neurological damage, one of the few things conventional Barsoomian medicine cannot fix. He believes the key to this process lies in the archives beneath the ruined city of Korvas.

As the first scene starts, Nalan Tir and his two children, Tira and Tirol Nal, are loading a flier with supplies for a several-month-long expedition. The flier is modest-sized, able to fit perhaps eight to ten individuals for extended travel, and it is unarmed. This is a vehicle for transport and exploration, not battle.

If desired, the narrator can change the locale. Ptarth, Zodanga, and any number of other red kingdoms make excellent alternatives to Lesser Helium. Helium is closer to Korvas than some locales, but this would be the only substantial change in the set up.

A Note on Korvas

Much of the action in this adventure takes place in the dead city of Korvas, the setting for the story *John Carter and the Giant of Mars.* This story, though at times credited to Edgar Rice Burroughs, was written and originally illustrated by Burroughs's son, John Coleman Burroughs. The story has some inconsistencies with the world of Barsoom presented by Burroughs, notably in the inclusion of three-legged rat creatures, and giants, neither appearing nor mentioned in previous work.

As ***John Carter of Mars*** seeks to present the world of Edgar Rice Burroughs himself as directly and faithfully as possible, Korvas will not be presented precisely as it is in *John Carter and the Giant of Mars*, but instead as many of Burrough's ruined cities were: ancient places populated by white apes, wild beasts, and the memories of the past. As a tribute to the author's son and family, we have used a slightly modified Korvas as the setting for this adventure.

However, as Korvas is only mentioned in the one story that is often considered noncanonical despite its connections to the Burroughs' family, narrators can relocate or replace Korvas if necessary with another location, either from the *John Carter* novels, or of their own creation.

BRINGING IN THE HEROES

The heroes can find themselves running afoul of the Eidolon's attempt to kidnap Nalan Tir in a number of ways:

- The heroes may simply happen across the attempt and decide to aid the aging scientist and his children as they call for help.
- They could be seeking Tir's help on another matter when the Eidolon's agents attack. As witnesses to the attempt, the Eidolon will try to eliminate them, regardless of how they react.
- They could have a run-in with an agent of the Eidolon, even if they do not know about the group, who hints at their mission to abduct Tir.
- The heroes could be panthans hired by Nalan Tir to provide security for his upcoming expedition. If so, they have just started their new job when the villains attack.

If the heroes refuse to get involved, narrators should remind players that ***John Carter of Mars*** is a game of romantic pulp heroism. Leaving a helpless old man and his children to their fates is dishonorable and un-heroic. Leaping into action to aid others, even if they do not wholly succeed, is a pathway to adventure and rewards, such as experience and renown. Refusing to act will profit them nothing.

ERAS OF PLAY

This adventure can take place in any era of play but, by default, it is assumed to happen during the Jeddak of Jeddaks era. In this time, all player character species are known to each other in some fashion and Carter's influence is widely felt. This makes parties of any composition and concept easy to implement.

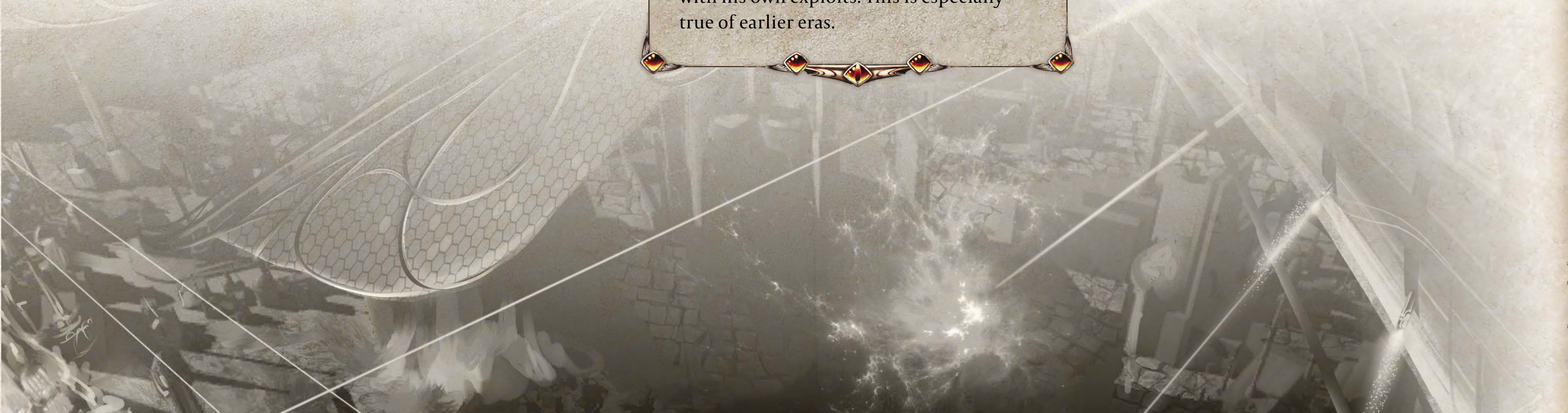
Setting this adventure during the Prince of Helium or Dotar Sojat era is easily done, but requires a couple of considerations if the party is made of many different races. First Born and Okar characters will be largely unknown or distrusted in various parts of Barsoom, requiring them to exercise a bit more care when interacting with others. Green Martians are seen largely as dangerous savages by the red Martians and others. Heroes will of course look past their comrades' strange ways, but the group may occasionally run afoul of city guards, suspicious officials, and citizens of various cultures.

Of course, if the players are using their own characters and not taking the role of John Carter and his allies for this adventure, they have an opportunity to establish their own legend with this adventure, even as Carter is making a name for himself with his own exploits. This is especially true of earlier eras.

PLAYING JOHN CARTER AND COMPANY

It is completely possible to play this adventure as John Carter or other established characters in the canonical Barsoom stories. This requires little modification to the adventure; simply decide on which characters players are using and when during the stories this is set. There are long periods of unrecorded adventure in the Barsoom novels and many characters to choose from. This is especially true during the Jeddak of Jeddaks era, where not only is Carter still active, but many allies and relatives are added to the stories.

Narrators can use the statistics for the canon characters found in the ***John Carter of Mars*** core book or they can allow players to craft their own versions of these heroes. The latter method is recommended if the players plan to continue playing these characters in an extended campaign. Not only does it give them a personalized hero to portray, but they will be more familiar with a character they built themselves.



SCENE 1.1: A FINE DAY FOR A KIDNAPPING

Adversaries: Scoma, Two Eidolon Agents per player character
Allies: Nalan Tir, Tira Nal, Tirol Nal
Special: For 2 Threat, the narrator can summon a Mind-Controlled Banth to aid the adversaries

For whatever reason they are present, the heroes are nearby when agents of the Eidolon seek to abduct Nalan Tir and his children. The Eidolon hope to take the three hostage, force them onto their flier, and rapidly leave the city. Any Eidolon who do not board the flier will cover the others as they escape. To aid in this operation, the Eidolon have sent Scoma, one of their most trusted agents, to lead the attempt, and have supplied her with several banths who have been conditioned and mind-controlled by the group.

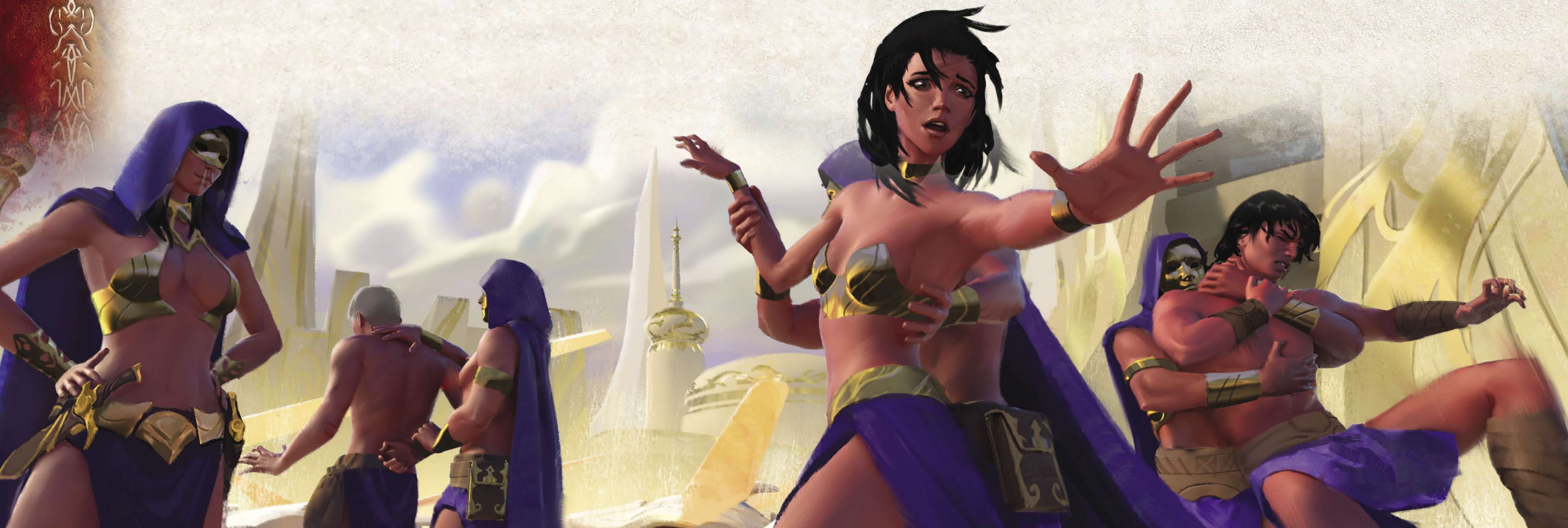
WHAT THE VILLAINS DO

Eidolon agents in the form of hooded and cloaked assailants surround the scientist and his children as they work to load their flier. They move swiftly and without pause or trepidation. They appear suddenly and move toward the small landing pad where the scientist and his children are working. Any character who sees them can identify the kidnappers and their nefarious intent with a **Cunning + Reason** (D2) test. Success allows the heroes to attempt to surprise the kidnappers, shout a warning, or simply generate Momentum to work in their favor in the coming encounter. Failure means the kidnappers get to act first, perhaps allowing them to quickly subdue their targets and begin to retreat before the heroes can stop them.

The kidnapping attempt is led by Scoma, who has disguised herself as a red Martian woman to better blend into the region. She is clear on her objectives: kidnap Nalan Tir and his children and, if possible, secure any notes, journals, or other intelligence at hand. If any part of this mission seems impossible, she will focus on the other objectives. Scoma plans to steal Tir's flier to make their escape, but she has another flier on standby if necessary.

USING TILES

If you are using tiles or maps for this fight, place Scoma, half the Eidolon, Tir, and the twins on one tile, with the villains adjacent to the civilians. Then place the other half of the Eidolon on the edge of the tile opposite the party, and partially on another. The heroes set up at the far edge of this second tile. Nearby, and closer to the narrator characters, place a tile to represent the landing pad for Tir's flier.



What the Heroes Can Do

Assuming the heroes wish to thwart the kidnapping, they can engage the Eidolon in battle and seek to secure Nalan Tir and his children. For their part, the Eidolon will attempt to divide and harass the heroes as they try to grab each target, separately if possible, ensuring if one gets away they won't lose all. Unless the heroes move closer before the action starts, they begin at Immediate range to half their foes, and Near range to Scoma, the other Eidolon, Nalan Tir, and his children. The second group of Eidolon are between them and the scientist and the primary force of kidnappers, and they will have to fight past or otherwise bypass them to reach their targets.

MOMENTUM

If a hero wishes, they can spend 3 Momentum for one of the twins to surprise an assailant, strike them down, and rush toward the heroes for help. This places them one range closer to the hero who spent the Momentum. This can be done at any time during the battle.

THREAT

If the narrator wishes, they can have the Eidolon subdue Nalan Tir or one of his children and drag them into the nearby airship on their next action. This costs 4 Threat and happens automatically unless a player hero has somehow made it to the landing pad to intervene directly.

Narrators should run this fight with a clear purpose: kidnap the targets and escape. Scoma and the Eidolon agents are motivated and disciplined and this should come across in their focus and effectiveness here. This doesn't mean rolling over the player heroes or cheating them out of well-earned victories, but as the first scene establishing this new threat, these villains shouldn't be push-overs and should have a definite tactical edge. Further, they have a serious advantage, as they are executing a mission they have planned and prepared for. To reflect this, narrators should spend Threat and exploit any relevant flaws the player heroes have.

I Curse Your Sudden and Inevitable Betrayal!

Unexpected betrayals are the common contrast to the valuable alliances and lasting social bonds so prevalent in most Burroughsian tales. No matter how devoted and stalwart most of the people the heroes meet turn out to be, there are always a few treacherous villains lurking in the shadows to cause problems. This adventure is no different.

In this case, one of Nalan Tir's children is an agent of the Eidolon. It was they who alerted the group to the possibility of using ancient technology to control others, and helped develop the rudimentary process the group uses to control animals. However, they need their father's superior knowledge and experience to perfect the process, hence this kidnapping. The twin hopes to keep playing the role of dutiful child and hapless victim for as long as they can—all the better to coerce their father and dupe any would-be rescuers. However, at some point they will reveal themselves, likely when they have a chance to "score a win" for their side. This may be in this part of the adventure, but it will more likely occur later on. However, narrators should be aware of this twist and plan for it, both by dropping occasional hints in how the twin acts, and by making them engaging and likable so the betrayal is more shocking and effective.

So which twin is the traitor? That is for individual narrators to decide. It might be the studious daughter and protector, tired of toiling while her brother does less work and their foolish father refuses to profit from all their years of study. Or perhaps it is the lazy but likable rogue of a son whose knack for shady deals and working in the shadows led him to some dark places. Perhaps both of them are in on it, two rotten fruits from the same tree.

Whoever the traitor is, narrators should remember to use Threat and other tools at their disposal to harry and harass the group with the traitor's actions. Does a weapon go missing, making them easier to ambush? Does a shot to "help" them in battle go wild and cause a rockslide? The traitor won't tip their hand too much, but they can cause a lot of mischief with the occasional and opportune bit of sabotage.

SCENE 1.2: PULLING BACK THE VEIL

Adversaries: Any surviving enemy prisoners
Allies: Any of the rescued kidnapping victims

With the battle over, the heroes now have a better chance to discover exactly what is going on. They can discuss with any of the targets for this abduction why they were attacked. Also, while the Eidolon likely fled or are dead, it is possible the heroes took a prisoner or two from among the kidnappers.

Unless the heroes have a better suggestion, Nalan Tir or either of his children who escape capture will invite the heroes into their home to discuss matters. It is a large, old building with spacious but spartan living quarters. A whole floor has been converted into a massive study and research lab. Any heroes with a background in science or technology can easily tell this is the workplace of a brilliant but unconventional mind, with old scientific manuals freely mixed with newly written journals containing Tir's various musings and theories. A **Reason + Empathy** (D2) test, (D4) for those with no scientific training, will reveal Tir is engaged in a piecemeal but very advanced study of ancient medical techniques in an attempt to recreate them. For an additional Momentum, they can discover Tir's focus is primarily on neuroscience and psycho-surgical techniques.

TALKING TO NALAN TIR

If Nalan Tir escapes capture, he relays to the heroes the story of a recent attempt to recruit him to a project to make intelligent creatures more obedient and suggestible. The offer came from a woman who called herself Scoma, who was accompanied by a large, one-eyed green Martian she called Jaggs. Tir refused, and the woman and her companion left, but something about their demeanor coaxed him to move up the timetable for his next expedition. Tir and his children were attempting to load their flier and leave the city when they were attacked. Tir's expedition was to be in the ruins of Korvas, where he notes one could find the necessary ancient knowledge to dominate the minds of others.

During their talk with him, Tir fusses and moves absent-mindedly around his laboratory and the gear for his upcoming expedition. At some point, he becomes distressed and begins to frantically search for something. When asked, or after some time searching, he reveals several of his journals are missing. Included among these are his notes on ancient methods of mental alteration and conditioning—a distasteful but potentially useful area for his own studies in healing the mind. A thorough search turns up nothing. The journals have been taken!

Tir is absent-minded and distracted throughout the conversation, doubly so if either of his children were taken. Heroes will need to ask direct questions, spend Momentum, or coax the story out of him with a **Reason + Passion** (D1) test (+1 difficulty for each of his children that were taken) to get him to offer up all the information he knows. Assuming the heroes can keep him on point, he relays most or all of the information in this section. If the heroes let him ramble or do not ask him leading or direct questions, he will give them only the most basic facts.

TALKING TO TIRA NAL

Tira Nal shares most of the same information as her father, but she also adds that she suspects her brother accidentally let slip their plans to leave the city ahead of schedule when he was buying supplies for their journey. She also expresses gratitude for her rescue, but this is overshadowed by intense concern for either of her family if they are kidnapped.

Tira Nal doesn't know nearly as much as her father about ancient methods of mind alteration, psycho surgery, and mental domination, but she can guess her father's own research into neurological repair and rejuvenation could easily be perverted to control others. She will offer that doing this would likely require ancient knowledge only found in places such as the lost archives beneath the ruined city of Korvas.

TALKING TO TIROL NAL

Tirol Nal has most of the same information as his father and sister, but he also adds that he suspects his sister may have accidentally let slip their plans to leave the city when she was gathering research materials and discussing matters with some other scientists and explorers. He is grateful for the rescue, but concerned for any family kidnapped—a fact he tries to hide with bravado and a joking demeanor.

Tirol Nal knows even less about his father's field than his sister, but he was asked to scout the ruined city of Korvas extensively in preparation for their current expedition. His father was particularly interested in ways to access the archives buried under the city, specifically any sections believed to hold information on neuroscience and studies of the Martian brain.

IF EVERYONE GOT KIDNAPPED

It is possible the heroes lost the battle or were unable to prevent anyone from being kidnapped. In this case, they can make a **Reason + Cunning** (D1) test to search the area. Success means they find Nalan Tir's journals and notes that detail his intention to head to the ruins of Korvas for an expedition. In the journal Tir also mentions an attempt to recruit him to work on an experiment of "questionable morality" involving mental control and conditioning. He notes that if such a process could be perfected, the secret to doing so would likely be found in the archives beneath the ruins of the city of Korvas. He notes that even if he were inclined to aid in such a "nefarious endeavor" he would need to study these ancient methods in more detail before there would be any hope of success.

If the heroes also all blacked out for this battle, they will be captured as well. However, instead of being loaded onto the flier with Tir and his family, they will be crammed into the cargo hold of another flier along with whatever notes and equipment the kidnappers thought valuable. For 2 Momentum they can find copies of Tir's journals. For an additional 1 Momentum they can overhear the guards and pilot of this ship discussing their need to fly to "our camp at Korvas" after they "dump the bodies of these interlopers over the wastes."

In this case, the heroes will be unarmed and facing the four crewmembers of this small flier. Narrators should be generous in allowing player heroes to find ways to overpower their guards, commandeer the flier, and discover where the kidnappers have gone.

If the Heroes Took Prisoners

If the heroes took any prisoners, they quickly learn the whereabouts of Scoma's companion, the Thark renegade, Jaggs Kurgas. Jaggs is on a distant rooftop (at Far range), watching the heroes through the scope of his rifle. If the heroes seek to interrogate a prisoner, Jaggs will shoot the prisoner, killing them with one masterful shot to the head. If the heroes took exceptional measures to protect the prisoners—not just taking them inside where they can still be sniped through a window or thin wall—then Jaggs will take a shot at one of the heroes or civilians nearby to cause chaos and confusion. During this time, the narrator can spend 2 Threat to have a nearby agent or traitor eliminate the captive. Doing so silences the prisoner but it still tells savvy players and their characters something: their enemies are closer than they think.

He will then take some pot-shots at the heroes before exiting the scene. It is unlikely the heroes can reach Jaggs before he can flee, but if they are extremely good marksmen or have exceptional movement capabilities, it is possible. In such cases, the narrator can direct a chase and running gun battle between Jaggs and whichever heroes pursue him.

Regardless of how the player heroes get to this moment, they should end the scene with a rough idea of the kidnapper's plot and next destination. It is likely the heroes wish to travel to Korvas next, but narrators should allow them to do as they wish.

Using Allies and Titles

Heroes with useful allies nearby, or titles that provide resources in Lesser Helium, may wish to use these to help locate any kidnapped victims and their assailants. This can be quite useful, but time is of the essence. Without taking so long the trail goes cold, most allies and titles can provide transportation, basic equipment, and some modest support. For example, a Princess of Helium could easily secure a manned flier and a small contingent of guards, but she wouldn't have time to rally an entire army before the kidnappers disappear without further trace. In any event, since Korvas is hundreds of miles distant, if the heroes are traveling there and lack fliers of their own, they will likely wish to use their accolades to help secure access to one.

What Happens Next

If Nalan Tir was saved but either of his children kidnapped, a messenger soon appears and directs him to come to the ruins of Korvas to exchange himself for his children. Tir will not be dissuaded from this course; he loves his children too much to risk their safety.

If Tir is kidnapped but either of his children are free, they plan to seek out their father and attempt a rescue in the ruins of Korvas. They too will not be dissuaded from this course.

If everyone was kidnapped, then it is up to the heroes to decide what they will do, but if they do not go to Korvas and seek to rescue Nalan Tir and his family, then the villains will soon resurface with a terrible power to dominate the minds of others. No loyal and honorable son or daughter of Barsoom could allow such a travesty!

If the heroes were captured, they will need to free themselves and decide what to do next. However, it is likely they will want not only to rescue Tir and his family, but seek revenge.

So in any event, it is likely the heroes will seek to travel to Korvas.

Reluctant Heroes

Sometimes player characters can be frustratingly resistant to join an obvious call to adventure. This might be because they feel they are being railroaded, or because they are worried they are walking into a trap. This is, at times, understandable. It is even appropriate for many settings. ***John Carter of Mars*** is not one of those settings.

This is a game about grand, often impulsive, and occasionally foolhardy, acts of heroism. Heroes do not sit back and plan for days and only act when everything is lined up just so. No, they pick up their sword, grit their teeth, and charge in – the way John Carter did.

It is likely most groups and players are aware of this and will rise to the challenge. If they do not, the narrator has a few options:

- Let them do as they will, but increase the Threat of their next adventures to reflect that in the background the Eidolon are working to perfect their mind-controlling process. Eventually this will lead to mentally dominated leaders and citizenry serving the villains' will and a conquered Barsoom.
- Use any flaws the heroes have that compel them to act. A hero with the Devoted to Helium flaw won't let a threat like this go unanswered. A hero with the Overconfident flaw doesn't need to wait for an army to help her face these villains.
- If nothing else works, simply explain to them the genre conventions and ask them "What would John Carter do?" It's unsubtle, but it can get things rolling. Remember: these sorts of grand heroics are how you get renown, one of the advancement resources in the game.

On the narrator's side, encourage heroic and impulsive action. Players will usually do what gets them fun and effective results. If you blast them every time they rush into danger or leap to join an adventure, they will soon stop doing that.

SCENE 1.3: ONWARD TO KORVAS

Adversaries: Jaggs Kurgas, Thark Outcasts
Allies: Rescued kidnap victims, any support gathered during the last scene

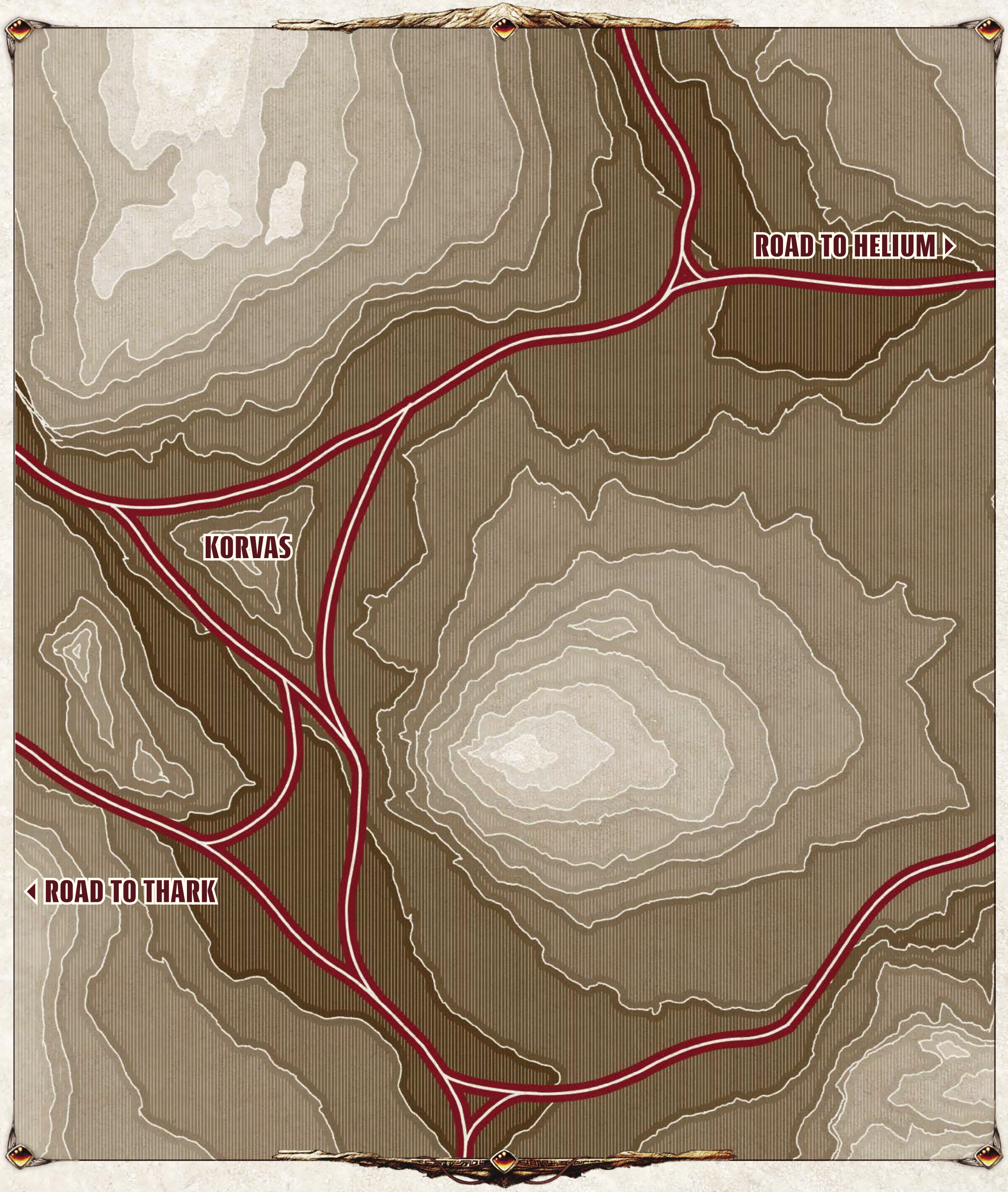
It is likely the heroes will wish to fly to Korvas. They could conceivably travel by land, but this will take much longer, and by then the kidnappers may have raided the archives and disappeared with their victims.

The heroes can approach the skies around Korvas easily enough, requiring a **Daring + Reason** (D1) test to reach the area by fliers. Unfortunately, that's when things get tricky. Unless the heroes are capable of masking their airship's approach, they will be spotted by the keen-eyed scouts of Jaggs Kurgas.

The Eidolon will expect some attempt to rescue their captives or interfere with their operation. They have set up defenses to deal with any fliers or ground forces approaching the area. Specifically, the Thark outcast Jaggs Kurgas and his contingent of lethal green Martian riflemen stand ready to shoot down any fliers who approach. If any interlopers survive this assault, they will find themselves facing the dominated hunting beasts their foes have sent out to finish them off.

Unless the heroes were able to secure a large, armed airship, which is unlikely due to limitations of time, their flier will suffer badly under the massed fire of the deadly accurate and long-ranged Thark rifles. Each turn, for six turns, whoever is piloting the heroes' flier must make a **Daring + Reason** (D3) piloting test. Failure results in the flier being damaged. After the flier is damaged three times it will crash, dealing 5⬢ damage to all inside.

Heroes may seek to spot and eliminate their attackers at the time, but it is Too Far for any weapon except long-range firearms such as rifles. However, if they can eliminate three of the Thark outcasts by shooting at them, the rest will retreat and cease firing. It will soon become apparent that, unless the heroes wish to face even more attacks, they will have to land outside the ruins and travel the rest of the way on foot.



Scene 1.4: Outside the Ruins

Adversaries: The Eidolon Camp
Allies: (Possible) Nalan Tir and his children

The heroes are safe, for now at least. Their foes believe them killed in their airship crash or devoured by hungry calots. They can rally and move toward Korvas.

At this point, the heroes can try to reach Korvas undetected if they wish, requiring a **Cunning + Daring** (D2) test. Each hero should make this test, though a character may pay 2 Momentum to allow them or a companion to avoid this test—this is an excellent way for skilled scouts to escort the party safely. Any complications on this roll should come in the form of wild animal attacks, raiders, and other regular perils of traveling the Barsoomian wilds.

Upon reaching the outskirts of Korvas, the heroes can see a camp with two fliers near the center of the ruins. The camp is crawling with Eidolon Agents and Thark Outcasts, at least four or five for every hero. If a character succeeds in a **Reason + Cunning** (D2) test, they can locate any one of the following individuals: Jaggs, Scoma, or any hostage. For an additional 2 Momentum they can locate an additional individual. Jaggs and Scoma have set up a base of operations in a nearby half-ruined building and are preparing to lead a group deeper into the ruins, toward a mostly crumbled but still impressive great structure. If spotted, Scoma is in the process of removing the red dye she used to disguise herself as a red Martian, revealing her naturally yellow Okaran skin beneath.

If a hero with sufficient knowledge of Barsoomian history succeeds in a **Reason + Passion** (D2) test, they can recognize this structure as the remains of the Great Hall of Korvas, a landmark under which the city archives could be found. If any of Nalan Tir's family is with them, this individual can also tell them of this.

What to Do Next

The heroes can approach this however they like. They can follow the group into the city or try to raid the camp to rescue any hostages, retrieve Tir's notes, or otherwise disrupt the villains' plans. Following the smaller expedition is likely to be more effective, and if they seek to free hostages or recover Tir's journals, then both will assuredly be with the smaller expedition. This smaller party consists of Jaggs, Scoma, and one Thark Outcast and one Eidolon Agent for each player hero.

Sneaking past the camp and following the expedition is not easy, but it is hardly impossible. There are ample places to hide and observe in the ruins. Sneaking past the regular guards in the camp is a **Cunning + Daring** (D1) test. Each character must make the test, but a character can aid an ally in staying undetected by spending 2 Momentum.

Following Scoma and Jaggs's group is more difficult. Allow the characters to follow for a time but twice during the journey to the Great Hall, have first Jaggs and then Scoma perform an opposed test against the hero with the lowest **Cunning + Daring** or who otherwise lacks stealth. In either case, the heroes are spotted, though the villains do not alert them to this – instead they plan to lead them into an ambush.

If the heroes successfully follow unseen, they will soon have their chance to act, as the villains stumble across the lair of the remaining denizens of this once great city. If the villains are on to them, it is they who will face these native terrors. In any event, the white apes of Barsoom come!

Get them, my Pretties!

The narrator can spend 1 Threat to summon 2 Mind-Controlled Calots and 2 Threat to summon a Mind-Controlled Banth to help the villains. This only works if Jaggs or Scoma are present and active, only they are given control of these beasts by their superiors. Narrators should use these additions to make fights more interesting, but be careful not to overrun players with numbers they cannot possibly defeat.

Scene 1.5: The Jaws of Death

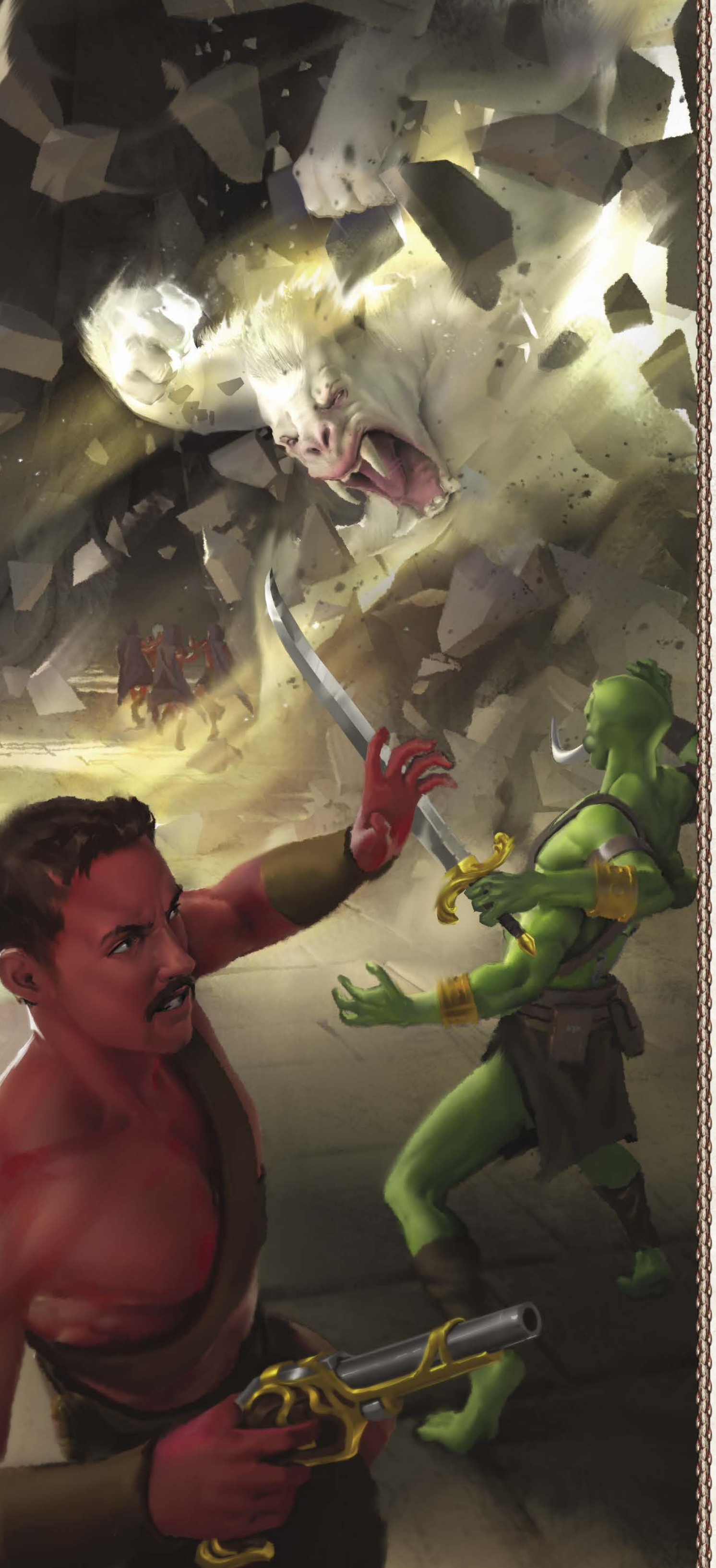
Adversaries: White Apes; (Possible): Scoma, Jaggs Kurgas, Eidolon Agents, Mind-Controlled Beasts
Allies: (Possible) Nalan Tir and his children

This scene begins two ways. If the heroes have been successful in stealthily tailing their foes, then some hapless guard, or perhaps one of the hostages, gets too close to an overgrown ruin and rouses a trio of white apes who call this city home. If the heroes were spotted, then as they near the Great Hall behind their foes, Jaggs Kurgas suddenly reels and looks directly at them. He fires his rifle several times, not at them, but into an overgrown building right beside them. A grumble and roar is heard right before a trio of white apes burst forth from their lair, enraged and hungry.

If the heroes seek to rescue a hostage or recover Tir's journals, now is the time. However, to do so, they must contend with three rampaging apes and whatever Eidolon forces are not battling these beasts. If they are quick and clever, the heroes may be able to grab their objective and run into the Great Hall. However, any complications, or moving to attack the apes or Eidolon forces, will result in a three-way melee.

If the heroes are ambushed by the apes, they must survive the fight. The villains will laugh at their misfortune and possibly mock them before running from the scene into the Great Hall and the archives below.

The white apes are typical versions of their species (*see **John Carter of Mars** core book, page 180*). If Jaggs roused them as part of a trap for the heroes, one of the apes has already gained 3 stress from a rifle round, but enraged, acts before the heroes during the first round.



This scene can play out numerous ways:

- **The Heroes Escape with their Objective**
  Be it hostages or Tir's notes, the heroes may find themselves in the Great Hall on their way to the archives. In this case, they can move on to the final scene of this part of the adventure.
- **The Heroes are Ambushed but Triumph**
  If the heroes are ambushed by the apes but defeat them, they can then follow the villains into the Great Hall and move on to the final scene of this part of the adventure.
- **The Heroes are Defeated**
  If the heroes fall to the apes or the Eidolon or some combination thereof, they awaken shortly in the nearby lair of the white apes, having been dragged off to be devoured later. They will face whatever apes were not slain in the last encounter, plus one additional ape. Assuming they escape, they will find their foes gone with the information from the archives. They do not progress to the final scene of this part of the adventure, but instead proceed directly to the epilogue, where they finally return to civilization.

If the heroes cannot defeat the white apes after being captured, they will either be devoured and their adventure will end, or some outside assistance will be required. An ally might rescue them or a band of friendly Tharks hunting in the ruins might discover them. This fortunate but embarrassing save should only be used if there is no other avenue—player heroes should usually save themselves or each other whenever possible.

LET'S MAKE A DEAL

If Nalan Tir is with the heroes and plans to exchange himself for one or both of his kidnapped children, this scene and the one before it play out a bit differently. Tir will enter the camp to surrender himself and the villains will take Tir and any heroes with him into custody. They will then escort Tir, his children, and any other captives to the archives with them. When they near the archives, Jaggs Kurgas and his Tharks will shove the heroes off by themselves and then fire his rifle into the nearby ruins to bring the white apes. He will laugh as he tosses them a few daggers, hatchets, and perhaps a single sword before leaving them to their fate.

USING TILES

If you are using tiles or maps for this fight or the next scene, arrange several tiles to provide ample room for players to maneuver their characters, and for the narrator to move the Eidolon and White Apes. The White Apes should enter the battle from one side of the map, with the heroes either between them or on the other side, depending on if they or the Eidolon roused the beasts. In the next scene, whoever reaches the archives first is set up at the center of the map, and their foes are placed on the map's edge, having arrived behind them.

SCENE 1.6: INTO THE ARCHIVES

Adversaries: Scoma, Jaggs Kurgas, Eidolon Agents, Mind-Controlled Beasts
Allies: (Possible) Nalan Tir and his children

The heroes finally enter the archives, either ahead of the Eidolon or on their heels. They descend into the darkness and find the ancient recording machines that store the knowledge they seek.

The archives are silent, a place of stale air and tomb-like stillness. It seems even the white apes avoid this place. Ancient guardian machines now lay shattered and inert, but some terminals still glow faintly with residual power.

A **Reason** + **Cunning** (D2) test will activate the ancient machines and allow them to access or destroy the data they seek. Nalan Tir or his children can also automatically do this; they have prepared for this exact task. If the heroes arrive after the villains, the villains have already started this process and Scoma is removing a metallic tablet which contains the necessarily data as the heroes enter. If the heroes got there first, they may attempt to either recover the information or destroy it.

RECOVERING THE DATA

Recording the data will take five turns. During this time, they must face any surviving Eidolon foes who seek to access the data and steal it for themselves. Scoma, in particular, is focused on recovering the data and will gladly sacrifice the rest of her party to acquire it. This makes keeping the data from her especially difficult.

PREVENTING THEIR ESCAPE

If the villains already have the data, they seek to get past the heroes and leave. They will try anything they can to do this; threatening to shoot hostages, actually shooting a hostage so they must be given medical care to keep them alive, causing a partial collapse of the underground chamber to cover their escape, etc. Scoma will gladly let Jaggs and the others sacrifice themselves so she can flee. If possible, she will take Nalan Tir and his children with her, but she has orders to save the ancient data first, then Tir, then anyone else.

DESTROYING THE DATA

Some heroes may wish to destroy the data to prevent it from falling into the wrong hands. Unfortunately, no one else desires this outcome. The Eidolon, of course, want the ancient secrets of human mind alteration, but Tir and his children also wish to acquire these secrets to use them for medical advances and healing. Wiping the data is much harder, requiring a **Cunning** + **Reason** (D4) test and taking eight turns instead of five. The ancient Barsoomians were loath to let their secrets die.

REMEMBER THE TRAITOR!

If the heroes are having too easy of a time of things, now would be a great time for whichever of Nalan Tir's children is secretly working with the Eidolon to betray them. They could grab the data and run, attack a hero from behind, or even, in an act of supreme evil, shoot their own father or sibling and mock their pained cries as they abscond with the data. The traitor will try to keep their true nature secret for as long as they can, but the Eidolon's plan for conquest is much harder without the secrets of the ancients. If necessary, they will reveal their duplicity to achieve their goals.

As this is the first of a four-part adventure, narrators shouldn't worry about the heroes failing to stop the villains here. In fact, the adventure is designed so that it is likely that at least Scoma will escape with the ancient lore needed to perfect the Eidolon's mind-control process. To this end, narrators should spend Threat to assist the villains, giving them additional resources or bonuses to help them achieve their goals. This is not "cheating" or playing against your players—it represents the plans and motivation their foes possess.

GETTING OUT

When the battle is over, regardless of how it is resolved, the heroes will need to leave the ruins. This could present a problem, as they are some distance away from their flier and it is very likely the Eidolon in the main camp have been alerted to their presence. If they cannot make it back to their airship, they will have to leave on foot. If they do make it back to their airship, it may be crawling with enemies.

Narrators can make this as complex or easy as they like. If the heroes are already hurt or the adventure has seemed to run its course, the escape from the ruins and return to civilization can simply be narrated. Alternatively, extra encounters or even whole other adventures can be inserted here, detailing the long odyssey to return from the ruins. Such adventures lie outside the scope of this book, but would be an appropriate option for Burroughsian stories.

THE JOURNEY IS LONG...

Regardless of how the heroes get back, it is likely it will take some time. There are few pathways at this point where they simply jump in their flier and get home for in time for supper. Narrators should encourage this passing of time, even if they do away with travel by narrating an additional scene.

This is important because, during the time they take to get back, the Eidolon will be acting, as seen in the *Epilogue* and future adventures. This not only sets up the next adventure but it also showcases some important things about the world and ***John Carter of Mars***.

First, no matter how mighty and important you are, you can't be everywhere at once, so friends and allies are important. Second, time moves differently here. Everyone is going to naturally live a long time and so taking time to get somewhere or resolve something is not a big deal. In many games, players would balk at being told "so a couple months later" or even "so you stay in Ptarth after the wedding for another year." They might even get upset, insisting on day one they do this and day two they do that, and so on. Narrators, perhaps with the help of players who are very familiar with the Barsoom novels, should remind any players wishing to engage in this sort of daily micromanagement that Carter himself often spent weeks, months, or even years between big events.

EPILOGUE

However this adventure resolves, the heroes will eventually return to civilization. They will wish to warn their allies of this new threat, and seek help among their own people. They may have Nalan Tir or his family with them, or they may still be in the clutches of the nefarious Eidolon. In any event, when they return to Lesser Helium or another civilized area, this epilogue occurs.

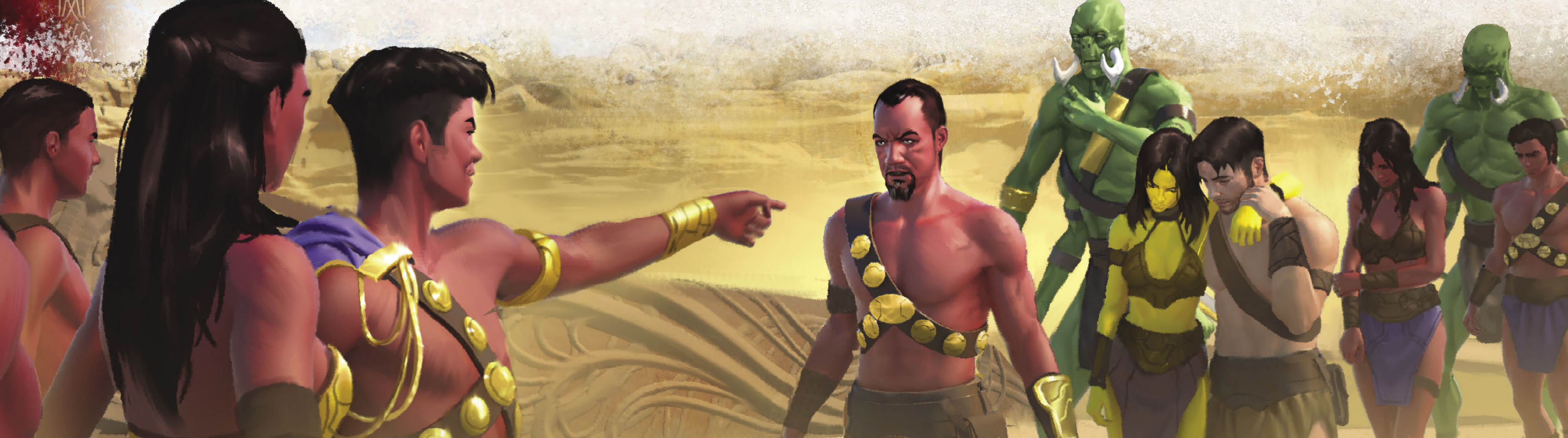
When they arrive at back at Lesser Helium (the nearest red Martian city), or nearby Greater Helium, they are greeted on arrival by a group of armed guards and a tall, thin-faced red Martian with an intense, scrutinizing stare. He introduces himself as Gell Moran, an advisor to Mors Kajak, Jed of Lesser Helium who is the son of Helium's Jeddak, Tardos Mors. Even if the heroes are well-acquainted with the courts of Helium, it is unlikely they know Moran, as he is a recent appointee to the position, though a **Reason** + **Cunning** (D4) test will reveal he was a minor official and secondary advisor the last time the heroes heard his name.

Moran greets the heroes with a smug, tight-lipped smirk before informing them they are charged with kidnapping, treason, and murder. The guards level their weapons at them and Moran instructs them to surrender immediately.

REWARD

Player heroes should receive 5 experience for this adventure. If they did particularly well, freeing Tir or his family, recovering the ancient data, or simply accounting themselves well in battle against the Eidolon, they receive a bonus award of an additional 5 xp.

Renown rewards are a bit less static. The heroes should gain one or two renown if they performed admirably during the kidnapping attempt, but their other actions for now are largely unknown. Fear not, this is a temporary situation—soon all of Barsoom will know of their deeds!



PART 2: TRAITORS AND FUGITIVES

Traitors and Fugitives is the second part of a four-part adventure for ***John Carter of Mars***. Here, the heroes are accused and arrested by agents of the dire conspiracy they uncovered in *In the Shadows of Korvas.* Hunted by legitimate authorities and the conspirators alike, they must gather evidence and allies to clear their names and bring the might of the red cities to bear against the Eidolon threat.

WHEN LAST WE LEFT OUR HEROES

Now aware of this new threat to Barsoom from the fiendish Eidolon plot, the heroes return to Lesser Helium intent on warning their allies, mounting a campaign against the heretical Holy Thern, and possibly rescuing any friends still in captivity at the end of *In the Shadows of Korvas*. Upon their arrival, they are greeted by a tall, thin-faced red Martian flanked by armed guards. With a sweeping, intense glare, he curtly introduces himself as Gell Moran, advisor to Mors Kajak the Jed of Lesser Helium who is second-in-command of the kingdom of Helium under his father, Tardos Mors.

OTHER WAYS TO BRING IN THE HEROES

As *Traitors and Fugitives* is the second adventure in the series, it assumes a very specific opening. However, narrators can make this entry flexible with a little creativity. Here are four alternative openings to this adventure to use as-is, or as inspiration for bringing a playgroup into the story.

- If the heroes aren't particularly attached to Lesser Helium, simply move the entire cast of characters into whatever city the heroes find themselves in when you wish to begin the adventure.
- The heroes could be targeted by Gell Moran for any number of other slights, and made into scapegoats as their introduction to the Eidolon plot.
- Joran Tai (*see page 12*) could approach them at any time, beginning the adventure with the heroes well informed. Joran Tai might then slip out of the room just before Gell Moran's arrival, or you could skip the first two parts of the adventure and begin with *Part 3: Raiders of Kaol.*
- A love interest or ally of one of the heroes might be falsely imprisoned in Lesser Helium, or on the blocks in the city's infamous slave markets. Upon the heroes' arrival, intent on helping their friend, Gell Moran accuses them as accomplices and co-conspirators.

ALTERNATE SETTING

By default, Gell Moran has his soldiers arrest the heroes as soon as they enter Lesser Helium, but this need not be the case. He might prefer to confront them deeper into the city, making escape more difficult, or to catch them relaxing or asleep in some place they considered safe. The narrator should choose the most dramatic moment to begin this scene, remembering that Gell Moran is something of a coward and it is his goal to capture the heroes so they may be framed and ultimately silenced. He will always seek advantages of ground and circumstance, and will, if at all possible, approach the heroes when they are separated from their allies and other support.

SCENE 2.1: TREASON!

Adversaries: Gell Moran, 2 Red Guards per player character
Allies: None

Open the adventure by describing the scene just before Gell Moran makes his appearance. Ask the players what each hero is doing, then have Gell Moran walk directly into the middle of it, escorted by several guards.

WHAT THE VILLAINS DO

Gell Moran greets the heroes with a smug expression. Once initial courtesies are exchanged, he gives a barely visible signal. All of his guards raise their weapons so as to be in a position to become threatening should any of the heroes require discouragement. Once he has the heroes' undivided attention, Gell Moran speaks.

"You are hereby charged with the kidnapping of Nalan Tir, scientist of Helium, treason against Jeddak Tardos Mors, the murder of Jed Mors Kajak's trusted advisor, and the slaughter of an entire garrison of courageous guards of Lesser Helium."

At the words, the guards accompanying Gell Moran gasp and utter appropriate curses at the perfidy of the traitors standing before them.

Heroes may make an immediate **Empathy + Reason** (D3) test to see that Gell Moran is not acting in the interest of his jed, that something more sinister is afoot. He will not speak anything more than those words before giving a second signal. At that moment, half of the guards level their weapons, the other half move forward to restrain the heroes for arrest.

At this point, the heroes have three options. They can accept their arrest and go where Gell Moran and the guards take them, they can fight their way to freedom, or they can attempt to talk their way out. In any case, the scene begins in earnest with the guards approaching the heroes, intent on restraining them.

GOING ALONG

If the heroes do not resist, the guards who restrain them will strip off all weapons and equipment. Allow a **Cunning + Daring** (D3) test to hide a weapon or other piece of equipment during this search. Any hero who possesses a piece of core equipment small enough to hide reduces this difficulty by 1 and may elect to do so automatically by spending 1 Momentum. Under Gell Moran's imperious direction, the guards lead the heroes to a flyer containing another squad of guards equal in number to those who first arrested the heroes.

Unless they attempt to escape en route, the heroes will in short order be brought to the dungeons abutting the great Slave Market of Lesser Helium. There, they are jostled along dark corridors and broad stairs until they are thrust into cells to await their sentence. In this case, move on to Scene: *The Veil Lifts.*

TALKING IT OUT

If the heroes attempt to talk their way out of the situation, Gell Moran will not be swayed by rhetoric. He is a willing agent of the Eidolons and is intent on the heroes' arrest or death. However, speaking to him might produce one of several positive outcomes before the action moves forward.

A second **Empathy + Reason** (D3) test will notice subtle aspects of Gell Moran's expression and demeanor, revealing that he does not believe the charges he is bringing to bear. Similarly, a **Passion + Reason** (D2) test stirs the patriotic hearts of some of the guards, leading them to hesitate when the real action begins (*see Escape!*). Should the heroes attempt to fight free after making this speech, half of the guards will hold back for one round before engaging in the fight. Each point of Momentum spent will increase the number of hesitating guards by 2. While the heroes cannot talk their way out of this situation directly, their words can spur strong and useful responses.

ESCAPE!

Should this scene ultimately lead to the heroes resisting arrest and seeking to escape, allow each hero a **Daring + Might** (D2) test at the beginning of the fight. Success means each hero has resisted a guard's initial attempt to bind their arms and may act before the guards. A hero may also spend 2 Momentum to push, strike, or otherwise assist a companion, automatically freeing them as well.

Any hero freed in this manner will be fired on by the distant guards and attacked by guards nearby when it is their turn to act, minus any who are persuaded to stay their hand (*see Talking it Out*). Any player who fails this test will be restrained and acts last in the turn, though they will keep two guards occupied as long as they remain restrained. They may attempt another **Daring + Might** (D2) test to free themselves on their action. Narrators can remind heroes they may succeed at cost to free themselves, in this case likely either injury or loss of actions as they struggle to get free.

Once initial actions and turn order is determined, handle combat normally. All guards will attack the heroes and attempt to subdue them if they fight and kill them if they try to flee. The guards bear them no special animosity, but they are loyal red warriors of Helium. They will fight courageously, and to the death.

Gell Moran will remain at the periphery of the battle, calling directions to and shouting threats at his guardsmen. He will strike if given an opportunity, but only if he can do so without unduly endangering himself. If attacked directly, he will defend himself to the best of his ability. At the narrator's discretion, this can cause shifts in the difficulty of tests for the heroes to fight the guards.

What the Heroes Can Do

Assuming the heroes do not necessarily wish to slaughter the entire arrest party, their best bet is to escape the fray and flee into Lesser Helium itself. Assume that the heroes and the guards attempting to restrain them all begin this fight in Immediate range, with Gell Moran and the other guards at Near range. If the narrator is using zones for this fight, then the heroes and all guards trying to restrain them are in the same zone while Gell Moran and the others are one zone away.

If the heroes can get to Far range from the guards, the guards will take one round of shots with their pistols before the heroes can break contact and move to the next scene, *Into the Night*.

MOMENTUM

Any hero may spend 2 Momentum to momentarily stall a pair of guards with a classic swashbuckling ploy such as pulling down a curtain, kicking up a cloud of sand, or pushing one guard to nearly fall from a height so a second must lose actions catching him and pulling him to safety. These guards will take no offensive actions for their next two turns as they free themselves from this distraction.

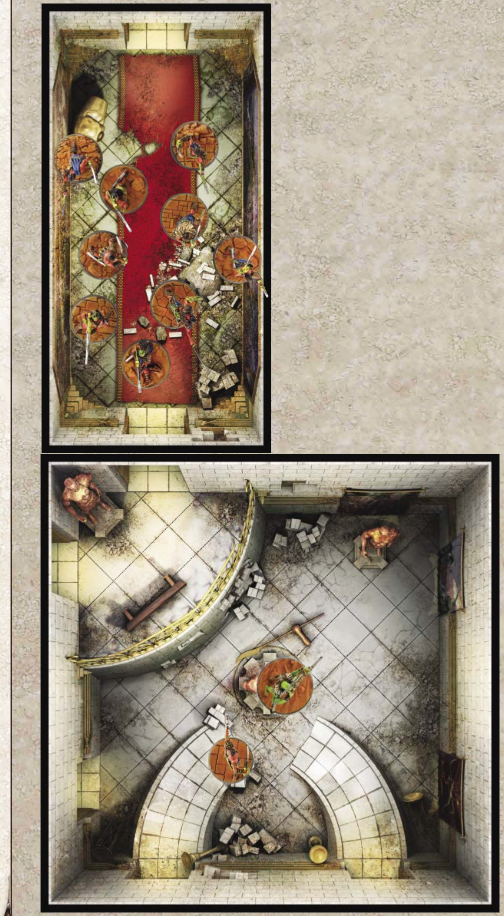
THREAT

If the narrator wishes, they can have Gell Moran call up the flyer he has waiting to transport the prisoners. For the cost of 5 Threat, it will arrive two turns afterwards, carrying a compliment of guards equal to 2 per hero. The flyer will remain at Away range, its occupants taking pot shots at visible heroes.

If the battle goes against Gell Moran, he will retreat, running for the flyer and returning to Mors Kajak with tales of traitorous villains running amok. It is possible for the heroes to slaughter Moran outright in this first scene, but that leaves less possibility for drama and derring-do later. The narrator should spend whatever Threat is available to help him escape.

Using Tiles

Narrators using tiles and miniatures can set this scene up with two tiles. The heroes begin on one tile, together, and they are surrounded by the guards who enter from the other tile and cross over to arrest them. The guards and Gell Moran are on the other tile, which is where the heroes must exit to escape the scene. If desired, a larger scene can be constructed with additional tiles, but the overall setup is the same, with the heroes surrounded and Moran and his men nearby ready to gun them down if they flee.



SCENE 2.2: INTO THE NIGHT

Adversaries: Gell Moran, surviving guards from previous scene
Allies: None

Once the heroes have escaped the immediate vicinity of the guards, they must then get to a safe place to regroup and plan their next action. This means fleeing through the city while pursued by any original guards who are still mobile after the fight, and Gell Moran's flyer, complete with reinforcements.

WHAT THE VILLAINS DO

Gell Moran and his guards pursue the heroes on foot and from the air, searching the immediate area and continuing to attempt their arrest. Gell Moran will remain in the flyer; he will not approach these dangerous fighters until they have been effectively restrained.

WHAT THE HEROES CAN DO

Narrators should run this scene as a series of tests and actions, describing minutes of tense action rather than rounds of combat. Use a cycle of tests and results as best matches the area of Lesser Helium where the conflict began.

For example, if the heroes were approached while high up in a crowded building, **Daring + Passion** might help them dash through a crowd, while **Daring + Might** could indicate a harrowing descent down the outside wall. In a deserted neighborhood, **Cunning + Reason** could resolve a game of cat and mouse through the empty buildings and streets. Start with a default difficulty of 2, with shifts based on the action at any given time. Threat can be spent to add dangers, making failure to navigate and evade them more perilous. Use success at cost and complications to accumulate Threat and insert obstacles in the path of the fugitive heroes.

Every time a test is failed in this scene, the heroes are spotted by the guards and they open themselves up to a clear shot. Two guards shoot at the hero who failed the test before they again find cover or temporarily disappear again. One additional guard can shoot for every Threat spent.

Each hero must succeed at four tests during this chase to evade capture, though they may spend 2 Momentum in place of a test for themselves or another player. Once each hero has succeeded on four tests, assume they have broken contact enough for Gell Moran to give up the search and return to report the traitors' escape.

MOMENTUM

Heroes who wish to spend Momentum to increase their chances of success on a test should create opportunities for escape, based on the circumstances in the scene. One might use Momentum to tap knowledge of a specific neighborhood, while another might use it to create a convincing distraction.

THREAT

For 4 Threat, one guard for each hero can close on the heroes and appear out of the shadows to engage them in close combat. If a fight with these guards lasts more than two rounds, increase the difficulty of future attempts to evade by 1.

Although each attack may seem largely identical, it is up to the narrator to make the circumstances of each unique. The first attack might come from a squad of guards blocking an avenue in front of the heroes. The second might consist of pistol fire from a nearby rooftop.

Once the heroes have each succeeded on their four tests, they have successfully eluded the pursuing guards. Move on to the next scene at this point, once the players have had an opportunity to debrief and discuss what has happened. If the heroes are disabled during the chase, they are taken to the dungeons as described in the previous scene.

What on Barsoom is Going On?

The Eidolon plot is deeper than even the most pessimistic hero imagined. Even with the kidnapping thwarted (at least partially), a good many loyal fanatics to the Eidolon cause are in every red city across Barsoom. As these heretics move to the next phase of their plot, they must remove potential enemies – enemies like the heroes who rescued Nalan Tir.

Across the red cities, agents of the Eidolon strike with almost uncanny unison. A wave of abductions, murders, slaughters, and planted evidence all aimed toward those most capable of opposing the conspiracy. Pharen Cul and his devotees wish to isolate the jeddaks from loyal friends, to make them more susceptible to mind-control. As it happens, the heroes are among those targeted for removal…

Further Deeper Betrayal!

If the traitor from *In the Shadows of Korvas* is present with the heroes, this presents an excellent opportunity to introduce complications, disinformation, challenge, and setbacks as the adventure progresses. See page 15 for a complete description of the traitor's role in this.

Whenever the narrator feels it is appropriate, they may spend 2 Threat to have the traitor shift up the difficulty of a particular test, either through apparent incompetence or some sort of sabotage. Likewise, they may spend 4 Threat for the traitor to introduce some kind of major setback.

Regardless of where the traitor is inserted in this adventure, they will do nothing overt or obvious, understanding the longer game still needs be played and they will be a more effective player if their true loyalties remain hidden for now.

Scene 2.3: The Veil Lifts

Adversaries: Varies
Allies: Varies

Having either escaped the clutches of Gell Moran or having been arrested, the heroes find themselves faced with a quandary. They know they did not betray, kidnap, or murder anybody. They might have gathered some hints from their encounter with Gell Moran, or made connections with the action in the previous adventure, but they begin largely in the dark. They must become enlightened as quickly as possible, before someone can stab them while the mental lights are still off.

The heroes will begin this part of the adventure either imprisoned or in hiding. The details of the action will vary according to which circumstance they find themselves in, but the general flow remains the same. The heroes must survive long enough to use their attributes, talents, and other resources to find some direction out of their situation. Through luck, skill, and ingenuity, they may find enough information to move forward toward a clear goal: clear their names and stop the Eidolon plot.

However the scenes in this part begin, it is essential to maintain dramatic tension as the players navigate this slower portion of the plot. For every day the heroes spend during this phase, add one Threat to the pool. Do so visibly, in a way that lets the players understand why it is happening. Every day that passes before the heroes act is another step forward in the Eidolon conspiracy. Narrators can spend Threat as described below, sometimes without revealing what it was spent on, to keep an atmosphere of tense concern about what's happening just beyond the heroes' sight while they hide from the authorities or languish in jail.

If the Heroes are In Hiding

Investigating a sweeping conspiracy while in a hostile city full of armed guardsmen eager to bring one to justice is even less relaxing than it sounds. In hiding, the heroes' main challenge will be moving unseen to meet with allies and contacts who might tell them what is going on, or point them in the direction of somebody who might know more.

Each day, any given hero may either attempt to set up a meeting with a potential contact or other source of information, or attend such a meeting. The realities of clandestine acts in an occupied city allow for no more than that much activity.

Attempting to set up a meeting is a (D3) test of whichever combination of attributes the narrator and player agree is most appropriate given the circumstances. Attending a meeting requires a **Daring + Reason** test to safely arrive on site, then a **Passion + Empathy** test to glean useful information from justifiably frightened individuals. Failure means wasted time, while failure with a complication adds 2 Threat to the already growing Threat pool.

Narrators should play up the tension inherent in having to hide under duress while waiting for vital information, using the growing Threat pool to indicate the Eidolon plot is gaining ground while they have to remain concealed.

MOMENTUM

A hero may spend Momentum to shift down the difficulty of any test at any time during this scene.

THREAT

In addition to the Threat spends available below, the narrator may spend 4 Threat to put Lesser Helium on high alert as Gell Moran pushes for a city-wide search. All tests for the next three days will be shifted up by 1.

The narrator may likewise spend 4 Threat to have a patrol of guards on site when they meet a party to gather information. The patrol will consist of one guard for every 2 heroes, plus one additional guard. Whether the heroes attempt to sneak away, bluff past the guards, or kill them outright is up to the players.

Finally, spending 8 Threat means the heroes have been betrayed by one of their contacts. A party of Red Guards, 2 per hero, will ambush their hiding space and attempt to bring the traitors to justice. Even if the heroes emerge victorious, they will have to waste two days' effort establishing a new hideout. Allies bought with renown will not betray heroes in this fashion, but characters associated with an ally or a character's title may reveal themselves to be a servant of the Eidolon.

If the Heroes are Imprisoned

Whether through subdual or surrender, the heroes may begin this scene captured. They are locked in individual cells, separate, but with each hero able to see into at least one other cell and speak freely among themselves.

The cells are walled in smooth sandstone, with a door made of bars, and only a pallet for furniture. The area is dimly lit from sconce lights in the hallway outside. They will be kept there, fed well enough and not horribly mistreated, able to speak with one another by whispering across the hallway.

Making any progress here requires getting the cooperation of at least one of the guards. They may attempt to interrogate one guard per day using a **Cunning + Empath**y (D2) test, with success gleaning information either from the guard's direct answers, or from the response to the question. Any complication increases the difficulty of subsequent tests by 1, representing both growing suspicion among the guards and the fact that the guards' information is finite. Regardless of how many successes the heroes roll, they can gather no more than four pieces of information in this manner, and none of these would come from somebody on the inside of the Eidolon plot.

Heroes may also attempt to send word via guards to contacts outside of the dungeons, conducting interviews remotely. This path first requires three consecutive **Empathy + Reason** (D3) tests to find a guard willing to pass messages. Afterward, a **Daring + Reason** (D3) test may be attempted to gather information every three days, with success revealing one piece of information. Complications add Threat as described below.

Narrators should emphasize the long stretches of empty time, and the possibility of execution or assassination that waits at the end of every hour. Threat accumulates, representing the free actions of Gell Moran and other Eidolon agents throughout Lesser Helium now that the heroes are safely imprisoned.

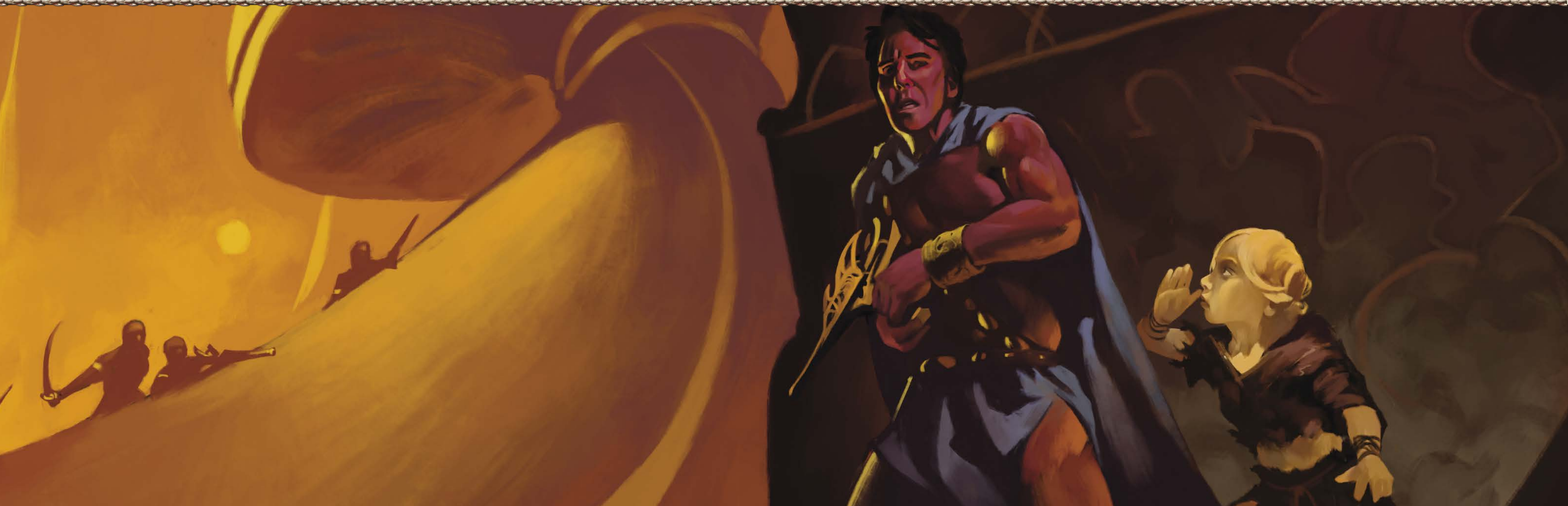
MOMENTUM

The best use of Momentum among the heroes would be to affect an escape attempt (*see below*). Otherwise, they can use it to increase the success rate of their investigations. A hero may also spend 4 Momentum to "reset" the guards' test difficulty, representing new guards coming into rotation with less suspicion and more information to provide.

THREAT

In addition to the threat spends listed below, the narrator may spend 6 Threat to have Gell Moran become aware that the heroes have been interrogating the guards. New guards, loyal to the Eidolon and unwilling to speak a single word, come to the prison. They remain on site for three days before new guards come back into rotation.

The narrator may also spend 8 Threat for a guard to offer to take word out of the dungeon, and then betray them by reporting the heroes to Gell Moran. If the heroes ask the guard for information, the guard lies to them. If they were attempting to contact an outside ally, word reaches them that the ally was captured and charged with assisting in heroes in their treason.



THE WORD ON THE STREET

Regardless of where the heroes spend this part of the adventure, their goal is to get enough information to create a plan of action. They need to learn why they were falsely accused, who was behind it, how it relates to the Eidolon plot, and how to overcome the conspiracy before it tears Barsoom asunder.

Each time the heroes succeed on a test to gather information they learn one of the following pieces of the puzzle. They may spend 2 Momentum to learn an additional piece of information. Information is delivered in a manner most appropriate to the action that was resolved in the test. One might come from a captured and intimidated city guard, while another comes in a whisper from a trusted ally. A third arrives in the mouth of a bribed prison guard.

Narrators can deliver the information in whatever order they like, though the items later in the list may only make sense with information from earlier. Some items might only be appropriate coming out of the mouths of specific kinds of sources, such as the secrets of the Eidolon mind-control or Moran's connection to the Therns.

- Gell Moran is now chief major-domo and advisor to Mors Kajak, Jed of Helium. Since his ascendance, arrests and executions have risen dramatically.
- The previous advisor, Relan Ban, was murdered not long after Gell Moran rose to significant power within Lesser Helium.
- Kopor Ruh, a lone survivor of the garrison supposedly slaughtered by the heroes, told friends he saw who actually killed his troops, and shortly thereafter fled for (city of narrator's choice).
- This kind of situation has been happening in other cities. Men and women known for their virtue and courage have been arrested and imprisoned under questionable circumstances. The heroes discover at least three cities suffering from Eidolon infiltration and plots (the narrator can and should make at least some of these locations important to the heroes, and those arrested of false charges their allies and loved ones)
- Most of these questionable arrests took place after atrocious slaughters, and surprisingly rapid changes of personnel among the most trusted of many jeds' advisors.
- The shield of Tars Kara, captain of the slaughtered guard garrison, was notched distinctively during the battle, and is missing. Whoever killed him might have a sword with a matching notch.
- Gell Moran is a devotee of the Holy Therns, and is seen in their company from time to time in Lesser Helium. After his last meeting with these Therns, the advisor, Relan Ban, was murdered and the heroes identified as the killers.
- These strange events, abductions, and assassinations are the work of a secret conspiracy known as the Eidolon (if the heroes do not already know this).
- Five people witnessed a meeting between Gell Moran and this Thern. Three are dead. The other two -- Cal Thoris and Macs Dorsom -- fled the city. They have found refuge in (two cities of the narrator's choice).
- The Eidolon have begun successfully using mind-control against intelligent, hostile individuals. The jeds of Kaol and Gathol are probably under their control already.

Narrators can add other information to this list if desired, such as information about notable Eidolon members, the identity of specific Eidolon agents hidden in a city, and anything else that makes sense that the heroes could uncover with thorough investigation or by consulting trusted contacts and allies.

THE TICKING CLOCK

In addition to the Threat spends described above, the narrator should also spend Threat to advance the Eidolon conspiracy, making subsequent portions of the adventure more difficult. Every so often, remove the appropriate Threat from the pool in a visible fashion but without explaining why. This should instil in the *players* the same sense of dread their heroes will be feeling as the gears of the plot grind all around them. A narrator may:

- Spend 4 Threat to make an additional city fall further under the power of the Eidolons. Choose any city of the red Martians or Okar for this—the Firstborn and white Martians are more insulated from infiltration at this time. From that point forward, Threat accumulates when acting in that city by 1 additional Threat every time it is gained. If you choose that city a second time, the difficulty of all relevant tests there shift upward by one as trust decays, the Eidolon's control tightens, and the populace is further corrupted or imperiled.
- Spend 6 Threat to have Gell Moran further consolidate his power within the court of Lesser Helium. Any attempt afterward to use titles or allies to help accomplish the heroes' goals will result in only a portion of what it normally would have. If an ally might normally have been able to provide a flier and some guards, their help now can only consist of a flyer hidden at a predetermined location. Times are becoming dangerous throughout Barsoom, and even the powerful dare move but with caution.
- Spend 2 Threat for Gell Moran to position additional enemy agents within Mors Kajak's inner circle. When the villain attempts his escape during the final part of this adventure, add 2 Red Guards to the enemies directly opposing the heroes. Narrators may do this multiple times, further stacking the odds against the heroes in the climax.

SCENE 2.4: JORAN TAI

Adversaries: None
Allies: Joran Tai

THE JEDDAK OF JEDDAKS ERA AND THE THERNS

While most of the Therns' power is destroyed by the Jeddak of Jeddaks era, there are still pockets of Therns and those loyal to them across Barsoom. If this adventure is set during this era, then Joran Tai is from such a group of influential Therns. During the Dotar Sojat and Prince of Helium eras, Joran Tai is a trusted advisor of the Therns High Hekkador, Matai Shang.

Holy Therns are, by and large, a selfish and arrogant race. They hold little but contempt for the "lesser" Martians, and consider them all merely pieces on a world-spanning game board. However, because they play that game against one another, some Holy Therns can be useful stopping the plans of others.

Joran Tai is such a Holy Thern. He leads a cabal who also want to dominate Barsoom, but wish to do so in a less horrifying and underhanded fashion, and whose plots are much further from fruition. See the *Cast* section on page 12 for full details of Joran Tai and his plot.

During this part of the adventure, Joran Tai will approach the heroes on the fifth day of their imprisonment or hiding. If the heroes are in hiding, he will approach them while they are returning from a rendezvous. If they are imprisoned, he will approach from the shadows while the guards are otherwise occupied.

He will be arrogant with the heroes, and dismissive of their questions and comments, but he will deliver valuable information. During this meeting, allow the heroes a single (D2) test using whatever combination of Cunning, Empathy, Passion, or Reason the players want to attempt.

A successful test means Joran Tai delivers two pieces of information they have yet to discover, and he gives the heroes a handful of names they can use to access his network as allies throughout the rest of the adventure series. Every point of Momentum spent during this test adds a single extra piece of information to what Joran Tai tells them. For 2 Momentum, he will also arrange for the heroes to "escape" if they are imprisoned—in reality a guard serving Tai will free them that evening and escort them a safe distance away before leaving them to their own devices.

Once his business with the heroes is concluded, the Holy Thern disappears into the shadows, leaving them to whatever fate they are able to make for themselves.

OPTIONAL SCENE: ESCAPE!

Adversaries: 1 Red Guard for every 2 player characters
Allies: None

Even if they do not begin this part of the adventure imprisoned, any number of circumstances could lead to the heroes becoming imprisoned during this part or the next. Imprisoned heroes likely want to escape. Regardless of where or when they make their attempt, adapt the following scene to the circumstances and locations of their escape. This scene also serves if the heroes wish to free a captive from prison later in the adventure with minor alterations.

WHAT THE VILLAINS DO

Any adversary the heroes encounter while attempting to escape will be a guard simply carrying out their duty. The guard will immediately use a melee-weapon to attempt to secure the prisoners, fighting without fear or mercy.

WHAT THE HEROES CAN DO

Escape begins with the heroes breaking out of their cells, which they can do with a successful **Cunning + Reason** (D4) test to pick the locks, or by attacking a guard through the bars and taking his keys. One guard for every 2 heroes is on duty in a guardroom just down the dungeon passage. Once the heroes cut their way through them, their next task is to escape the dungeon altogether.

Whether the heroes run, fight, sneak, or bluff their way up to ground level and out into Lesser Helium, have them make an appropriate (D2) test every few minutes. Let the player describe which action they want to take, and choose which combination of attributes is most appropriate.

One might wish to use **Daring + Might** to dash madly through the corridors and past surprised guards, or to cut down a squad in their path. Another might attempt **Cunning + Empathy** to bluff their way through. A third might use **Passion + Reason** to gather other prisoners around them for a mass jailbreak.

Do this for a number of tests equal to the number of characters making their escape, with a different hero making the test each time. Be as descriptive as possible, detailing what each test means and how the prison reacts, using the following guidelines for inspiration.

Success means the hero has successfully moved toward the exit. Continue on to the next hero's test, with Momentum available to make subsequent tests easier. Success at cost means the hero has successfully moved toward the exit, adding Threat to the pool as the prison's forces mobilize.

Failure means the heroes have stalled in their escape attempt in a manner appropriate for what they were attempting. Add 2 Threat, and that hero must take an additional test on the next round before moving on.

MOMENTUM

Any hero may spend 2 Momentum to pick up a weapon or piece of useful equipment without slowing down their progress. If the heroes do not spend Momentum, they can still pick something up from a defeated opponent, gaining 1 Threat to represent the hesitation necessary to strip a downed foe.

THREAT

At any time, the narrator may spend 2 Threat to put Red Guards equal to half the party's number in between them and freedom. They may spend multiples of 2 to double, triple, or further increase that amount to create larger battles (or greater risk if a bluff or stealthy approach fails).

The narrator may also spend 4 Threat to put a major obstacle in the heroes' path. This might be a classic pit they must jump (requiring each hero to pass an additional test to cross), or a room full of innocent bystanders who might be harmed in the battle, a locked door, a cul-de-sac, or any other similar event to add another colorful episode to their ordeal.

Once all heroes have succeeded on their tests, they reach the exit from the dungeon. At this point, narrators should spend all remaining Threat available to create a climax scene for the escape. This might mean multiple guards, dangers, or even possible additional enemies such as guard beasts from the beast pits, depending on how your players are feeling and what Threat is still available.

BREAKING SOMEONE OUT

If the *Escape!* scene is used to break someone else out of prison, it works much the same but with one major alteration. The heroes must infiltrate the prison before they can open cells and free anyone. This involves a **Cunning + Daring** (D2) test from each character attempting to sneak into a secure area undetected. Failure adds 2 Threat and raises an alarm that will bring one Red Guard per character to investigate. This happens just as the players find the character they seek to rescue but before they can open their cell or otherwise act.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

At some point in this process, the heroes will arrive at the conclusion that they are not the victims of simple mistaken identity, but instead, a wide-spanning sinister plot. They will also become aware of the peril to both Barsoom and their friends.

Once thus informed, they will wish to leave Lesser Helium for other cities, securing proof of a conspiracy and proving their own innocence. At this point, move on to the next scene.

SCENE 2.5: THE GRAND TOUR

Adversaries: Eidolon Agents, Guards
Allies: Varies (depending on who the characters contacted and have available)

Now aware of the Eidolon plot and safely out of Gell Moran's clutches, the heroes must chase the clues they discovered while imprisoned or in hiding. This part of the adventure will take them across much of Barsoom, as they visit city after city to gather evidence, allies, and resources.

This is the most open-ended part of the adventure. Narrators should begin by allowing the heroes to make their plans, and then follow each plan into action. The most difficult part will be keeping the action sharp and the tension high as the heroes get farther from their enemies. Use the accumulation of Threat once again to help keep the sense of hurry, and of wheels in motion just out of sight.

Further, you will find that no particular resource or clue is limited to a single location or event. Narrators should use their own sense of pacing and dramatic tension, as well as their knowledge of the players themselves, to decide on how many false starts and scenes it should take before they begin to make progress.

Throughout this part of the adventure, the heroes have two goals: clear their names, and stop the Eidolon plot. They will not be able to effectively do the second before they accomplish the first, but they may be able to gather information, allies, and other resources to help them once their innocence is established.

This "scene" is, in fact, multiple related scenes that all follow the same general format. How many times variations of this scene play out depends on the narrator's desires and heroes' actions. The heroes may secure what they need in one grand scene or they may travel all across Barsoom over several game sessions. As a default, it is expected this scene plays out three or four times in various ways in different places.

HUNTING FOR HELP

The flow of this part of the adventure will be iterations of the following steps:

- **Step One:** The heroes choose a red or Okar city where they have a lead for information, or knowledge of an imprisoned ally or resource.
- **Step Two:** The heroes go to that city and resolve their plan to gain the information, free their ally, or find the witness. When they do so, they discover information that helps clear their own names and reveals more of the Eidolon menace.
- **Step Three:** Armed with more knowledge and/or support, the heroes repeat step one and step two until they feel they have sufficient evidence to support their claim, and enough strength to reach Lesser Helium alive to state their case.
- **Step Four:** Once they are ready to proceed, move on to the next scene.

HOSTILE TERRITORY

Arriving at any city influenced by the Eidolon plot carries risk to the heroes. Some cities are wholly controlled by Eidolon agents who have replaced or undermined the normal leadership. Others are independent but have heard news of the heroes' villainy -- and that of other Eidolon scapegoats -- and are eager to arrest the traitors. Even those who would actively resist the Eidolon are unaware of the threat they pose and still house agents and assassins ready to silence the heroes once and for all.

Use Threat to buy encounters as described below, keeping these scenes tense. As the heroes seek allies and information, the Eidolon push back and seek to exert their power and destroy the heroes. The heroes are wanted men and women, with literally thousands of fighting men poised to kill or capture them. Even the safest haven should engender a shadow of doubt; with the heroes worried their presence might endanger their protectors.

The heroes will reach each city with one or more objectives. Upon arrival, they can make an appropriate series of tests, based on the narrator's assessment of how they wish to achieve their objective in that given city.

FINDING WITNESSES

If the heroes come looking for witnesses to Gell Moran's meeting with the Holy Thern: Kopor Ruh, Cal Thoris, or Macs Dorsom, they must first find where the fugitive is hiding. Afterward, they must get the witness to trust them enough to tell them the truth. Finally, they may attempt to convince them to return to Lesser Helium and give their testimony before Mors Kajak.

Each stage of this requires an appropriate (D2) test to advance forward: Locate the fugitive, reach them without being followed or stopped, persuade them to help and then convince them to return and give testimony. The narrator should use the choice of city, backstory of the witness, and general judgment to set each scene and resolve it appropriately. Failure of any of these steps can stall this effort, and succeeding at cost or suffering complications can add Threat that is used to hinder the heroes and their efforts.

If successful, the heroes will find out from these witnesses that Moran took orders from a white-skinned Thern in a mask who told him to proceed with their "plans to seize power in Helium" and that Moran has "just the fools to frame for the deed." The witnesses do not know what these plans were, but they can all guess: put Moran into power as Mors Kajak's closest advisor and then either eliminate or undermine the jed.

As the heroes attempt this, the Eidolon will seek to locate and eliminate these witnesses. Narrators may spend any Threat available (*see Threat in this scene*) to send opposition to strike, attempting to silence the witnesses.

Gathering Information

In any city, the heroes can simply attempt to gather information. Allow a single **Empathy + Reason** (D2) test per day to successfully learn an important fact. Success first gives the heroes one piece of information they missed from the list in Scene: The Veil Lifts. Narrators may rule that some information requires more difficult tests.

After that, they learn one piece of valuable information that will help them with their next task as described in Scene: The Veil Lifts.

Freeing Allies

Allies and potential allies of the heroes are being imprisoned all across Barsoom. Should they wish to free their friends, use the mechanics in the optional scene (and sidebar) Escape! to construct a scene detailing the jailbreak. Any freed prisoner will gladly relate a tale of how masked agents of some sinister group seized them or how an influential but treacherous official framed them for some offense.

In these jailbreaks, narrators may spend additional Threat to increase opposition or add additional enemies who wait to ambush any who wish to attempt a rescue. These additional enemies are usually ordered to kill a prisoner rather than allow them to escape and it is possible one of the heroes' allies or friends may perish at the hands of the Eidolon.

MOMENTUM

Narrators should be liberal with allowing creative uses for spending Momentum, "rolling with" any reasonable request. Spending Momentum to improve test results will be common, but certainly allow a player who wants to spend 4 Momentum to have a friend in town provide a safe base of operations, or 2 Momentum to know a bar where potential allies might gather.

Further, the heroes may at any time spend 4 Momentum to access the network of Joran Tai. Such a choice gives one resource toward the heroes' progress, allowing them to automatically overcome one obstacle or evade one problem. Do not let the players simply "hand wave" away the situation, but rather work with them to describe in detail what the resources of this faction of Holy Therns makes available to the heroes. Tai can free allies, secure secrets, and otherwise make things easier for the heroes as a show of his support. Of course, such favors are expected to be repaid.

Threat may be used in place of Momentum as normal to secure Tai's aid, though this will certainly result in eventual repercussions as Pharen Cul and his followers seek to end the Thern's use of the heroes as agents.

THREAT

The function of Threat in this part of the adventure is to make the heroes feel the impact of the growing Eidolon strength. Apart from all other Threat accumulation, each day that passes adds 2 Threat to the pool. Narrators may spend Threat in any number of ways, adding complications, dangers, increasing difficulty of tests, and otherwise hindering the heroes.

Narrators may also spend Threat to increase the Eidolon plot's progress. As before, narrators can:

- Spend 4 Threat to make an additional Okar or red city become further under the power of the Eidolons. Choose a city described on page 44. From that point forward, any Threat that accumulates here is increased by 1 (including daily Threat increases if the heroes are present in such a city). If you choose that city a second time, the difficulty of all relevant tests there shifts upward by one.
- For 2 Threat, the heroes are attacked by a gang of goons hired by Eidolon agents. One goon per hero, plus two Calots, assault them on a city street and fight until disabled or routed. Mere pawns, these attackers can tell the heroes little more than a vague description of who hired them to make the attack. Use Eidolon Agents and Mind-Controlled Calots from the *Cast* section to represent these foes.
- Spending 4 Threat means agents of the Eidolon have found the heroes, and convinced legitimate authorities to come and arrest them. Base this scene either on the opening scene of this adventure, or one of the Threat possibilities from The Veil Lifts while the heroes are in hiding, and resolve appropriately.
- The vicious assassin Pax Parka finds and attacks the heroes if the narrator spends 5 Threat. *See page 8 in Cast for full details on this warrior and his methods.* He will retreat if sorely wounded, but will return on another day if the narrator spends additional Threat.
- For 6 Threat, any Eidolon lieutenant still alive from previous adventures, such as Jaggs Kurgas or Scoma, can appear with one Eidolon Agent or a similar minion.
- For 8 Threat, whatever city the heroes are in becomes embroiled in a brief but violent civil war. Agents of the Eidolon foster riots in the streets, and the forces of the jed engage them. It will be impossible to make progress on any goals for three days, and afterward any movement or social interaction within the city require tests at one step higher in difficulty, as paranoia and martial law make everything harder.

It can help to increase dramatic tension if the narrator teases that a Threat event is coming soon. For example once the Threat pool reaches 4, the next interaction the heroes have can include a warning that the authorities have been asking questions. This further creates the sense of the heroes as wanted, hunted fugitives.

Once the heroes have gathered the evidence and support they feel they need, they can buy, commandeer, or steal transport and return to Lesser Helium for the final showdown. Allies can be of great assistance here, especially those with access to reliable fliers or some other form of travel.

City by City

See ***John Carter of Mars*** core book, page 109 for full descriptions of the various cities of Barsoom. The heroes will visit several during the course of this adventure. It is important for narrators to make each city feel different from the last.

GREATER HELIUM

Tardos Mors and his advisors are free from Eidolon influence, but many in the Helium navy and among the guard have been replaced with Eidolon agents.

LESSER HELIUM

Jed Mors Kajak is not compromised. However, his chief advisor is an agent of the Eidolon. Threat gains here are increased by 1.

ZODANGA

Many citizens of Helium's rival are unhappy with having lost the war. Enemies of Mors Kajak are surprisingly safe here and the heroes will be treated as such until their names are cleared. All tests to move through and gather information here are 1 step lower in difficulty. Further, Threat spends cost 1 more than normal here.

KAOL

The Jed of Kaol is in thrall to the Eidolons, having been one of the first victims of the mind-control technology they stole. The entire city is gearing up for war against Ptarth, a pretense constructed by the Eidolon to hide their other plans. All actions in Kaol are normal, however, as the city's entire focus is on their enemy. More on Kaol and its role in the Eidolon conspiracy will be found in *Part 3: Raiders of Kaol.*

PTARTH

Every advisor to the Jed of Ptarth is either in thrall to, or a willing agent of, the Eidolons. Thuvan Dinh himself is no Eidolon agent but was wounded in an assassination attempt and is in hiding alongside a handful of loyal guards and nobles. The rest of the city is gearing up for war against Kaol. All actions here are normal as the city's focus is on their once ally turned newfound enemy.

DUSAR

The rulers of Dusar have neither been infiltrated by the Eidolons, nor become aware of their plot. All actions in this city are normal.

GATHOL

The Eidolon's earliest attempts at mind-control began here, where the rulers seemed easy targets. However, the flawed technology resulted in a hindered but uncontrolled nobility. The city is falling apart as its leaders have abdicated all duties in favor of a torpor of luxury and decadence. This lawless environment means all tests are one step lower in difficulty. However, all Threat gains are increased by 1 because Eidolon agents operate freely.

DUHOR

Another enemy of Helium. Tests to move and gather information here are one step less in difficulty until the players clear their names.

PHUNDAL

The philosophy of the Phundalians makes them resistant to manipulation by the Eidolons. Threat gains here are reduced by 1, as they have fewer agents acting freely here.

AMHOR

The wicked, paranoid Jed of Amhor is aware of the Eidolon's plot for his city, and he has executed many of their agents. Tests here are 1 step lower in difficulty. If the heroes discover the tyrant knows of the Eidolon, they may strike a devil's bargain and recruit his help in the coming conflict.

KADABRA, ILLALL, & MARENTINA

The Okar city states are remote but the Eidolon consider them important enough to target. They have yet to undermine a jed or jeddak among the Okar, but many advisors, consorts, and soldiers among the yellow-skinned Okar are spies for the Eidolon. The Eidolon trickster and master spy Scoma in particular has many hidden agents in the cities of the frozen north. Any Threat spends to arrange for enemies to attack or harass the heroes cost 1 less.

MANATOR, TOONOL, MORBUS, & PANAR

These cities are either too remote, or too far removed from general red society, to be appropriate for this adventure. Narrators may safely assume the Eidolon have no active plots in these cities, instead opting to "mop them up" once they have successfully captured their other prizes.

SCENE 2.6: ENTERING LESSER HELIUM

Adversaries: Varies
Allies: Varies

Once the heroes are ready to return to Lesser Helium, whatever transport they are able to access will get them there in a few days' time, perhaps a week. Fast-forward through those days in a single descriptive sentence. This is the climax of the adventure, there's no time to slow it down with the details of travel.

The heroes have a wide variety of options for entering the city, but most will fall within three approaches. If they come up with something different, improvise an appropriate resolution drawing inspiration from the options described below.

JED, I BEG

Heroes may wish to sneak through Lesser Helium and into Mors Kajak's audience chamber unseen, unannounced, and unarrested. Have each hero first make a **Cunning + Reason** (D1) test, then a (D2) test, and finally a (D3) test as they work their way through the abandoned outskirts, populated inner city, and finally the guarded palace of the jed. Describe each feat of the heroes appropriately, then move to the audience chamber, where Mors Kajak sits surrounded by guards and allies, holding his court. Failure of the first test adds 1 Threat, the second 2 Threat, and the final alerts the palace guard, summoning 2 Red Guards per hero to bar the way into the audience chamber.

Once the heroes reach the Jed, they must make their presence known. It will require an immediate **Passion + Empathy** (D3) test to convince Mors Kajak to listen to them. Increase the difficulty by 1 if they fought the guards to get there and reduce it by 1 if they had previous good dealings with the Jed. If the heroes succeed, move on to the next scene and resolve the trial. The guards and audience, including Gell Moran, silently watch, arms at the ready, as the Jed demands the heroes recount their tale. Success at cost is available for this test, leading to complications in the next scene or the easy escape of Gell Moran after his deception is revealed.

If the test to convince Mors Kajak fails, he orders the heroes to be taken into custody. A number of Red Guards attack the heroes equal to double the number of heroes. If they are dispatched, allow an additional test to get Mors Kajak to listen. Repeat until the heroes are either successful, or subdued and cast into the dungeons.

THROUGH FORCE OF ARMS

If the heroes wish to charge the gates of Lesser Helium and carve their way to the audience chamber, they should make relentless progress in the middle of a swirling and chaotic battle. This option is all but impossible without a force of warriors to aid them—there are simply too many forces against them. Regardless of many people the heroes bring to aid them, keep the action focused on the heroes.

Each individual hero must succeed at a total of four (D2) tests to advance from the first clash of arms near the gates of Lesser Helium to the doors of the audience chamber. The tests should represent their progress through the city, beginning with a **Daring + Might** test to cut down their first attackers and progressing based on how they choose to proceed. Use the result of that first test to continue the action as the heroes fight enemies, sprint down streets, and lead across alleys on their way to the palace.

No test, no matter how badly it fails, stops a hero from reaching the goal. Instead, it produces action and complication between the heroes and their destination. Make liberal use of success at cost to get everybody in front of the door to the audience chamber, though they may have a hard time convincing Mors Kajak after they have raided his city!

Once all have reached the door, they may kick it in. They are immediately attacked by Red Guards equal to twice their numbers. Once they dispatch those guards, they may attempt to speak with Jed Mors Kajak as in the *Jed, I Beg* section

WONDROUS PAGEANTRY

In this scenario, the heroes arrive at the head of a column of respected fighters. Their first challenge is to convince the fighting men of Lesser Helium they are not an invading army, but rather potential allies here to present their case. They will need glorious allies in the form of jeds and jeddaks, great champions, or other luminaries of note for this plan to work.

This requires a **Passion + Empathy** (D2) test, if it fails, the heroes find themselves embroiled in *Through Force of Arms* as described above. If successful, they are allowed to march their parade through the streets toward Lesser Helium's center. As always, success at cost is available here, perhaps increasing the Threat or adding a complication in exchange for an honored but cautious escort through the city.

Approximately halfway to the palace, the parade meets a line of red guards, with Gell Moran riding a zitidar directly behind them. The villain instructs all of the heroes, allies and troops to lay down their arms and allow him to arrest the criminals.

A **Passion + Cunning** (D3) test is required to discredit Gell Moran, who has no real authority to order the assembly seeking audience with Mors Kajak in this manner, or a **Passion + Reason** (D2) test to stir the troops before him, allowing the parade to continue moving forward. In either case, success sets the crowd in favor of a fair hearing and convinces Mors Kajak to meet with them. Moran will retreat ahead of the mob to reach the audience chamber before the heroes, who will arrive unmolested and are permitted to enter and speak.

Failing this test results in the heroes deciding if they will submit to being arrested, or if they engage in a full-scale battle in the middle of the city. If the former, go to *In Chains*. If the latter, resolve *Through Force of Arms* above.

OPTIONAL SCENE:
IN CHAINS

Adversaries:
Gell Moran, 2 Red Guards per player character
Allies:
Joran Tai

If the heroes are captured or arrested during their attempt to reach Mors Kajak, they will be taken in chains to a cell. Gell Moran will inform them they have been found guilty in absentia and that their execution will be performed in the morning. However, there is a visitor Moran did not expect: Joran Tai, the Holy Thern. Tai will wait until Gell and most of the guards exit and then appear to the heroes, opening their cells and giving them the keys to their chains. He will smile thinly and tell them they should hurry if they seek to meet with Mors Kajak. He then shows them a hidden passage nearby that leads to the audience chamber. The heroes can enter, surprising all assembled, and ask Mors Kajak to hear them. This requires an immediate **Passion + Empathy** (D1) test but adds 2 Threat—Mors Kajak is worn down by the heroes' persistence and his curiosity is piqued, but Gell Moran is more ready than ever to deal with the heroes and their meddling!

SCENE 2.7: THE TRIAL

Adversaries: Functionally infinite
Allies: Various

Finally able to speak directly to Jed Mors Kajak of Helium, the heroes must now present their case. However, Mors will only agree to hear them if they give their word of honor they will abide by whatever decision he makes. Martian honor is clear on this point, only a villain would break such a promise once given, and it is their only way to secure an audience.

Once they agree to recognize the authority of the Jed's decision, they will be permitted to speak and bring forward evidence and witnesses, before a decision is made. Any reasonable evidence will be considered, from the testimony of witnesses who saw Gell conspiring with the Eidolon, to evidence of conspiracy, assassination, and other crimes perpetrated by the Eidolon and their agents. Physical evidence can also be useful, such as Eidolon masks, secret communications, proof of infiltration in other cities, and anything else the narrator feels casts doubt on the heroes' guilt.

PRESENTING THE CASE

Each hero will be called up in turn to present their case and evidence. Allow each an appropriate test (most likely **Reason + Empath**y or **Reason + Passion**). The difficulty of each test depends on what support the heroes bring with them, and how well they roleplay the event.

Reduce the difficulty of this test by 1 if the heroes present strong evidence of the Eidolon plot or roleplay this moment exceptionally well. Increase it by one if they make claims about the plot without presenting evidence, are unconvincing or evasive in their presentation. Even on Barsoom, the notion of a planet-spanning conspiracy seems the far-fetched imaginings of a guilty mind.

Gell Moran becomes visibly and increasingly uncomfortable as the heroes bring their evidence to the Jed. When they have all had their chance to speak, Mors Kajak's response will be based on the results of the heroes' efforts.

If the heroes scored no successes, he orders that they be thrown into the dungeons. The heroes have promised not to resist and if they do, they will be branded villains and cowards and Mors Kajak and all his guards will seek to beat them down. With such vast numbers arrayed against them, the heroes have little chance and the narrator can simply inform the heroes they fight fiercely but are soon overwhelmed and subdued.

If the heroes score any successes, Mors Kajak opens his mouth to speak. Before he can utter a word, however, the panicked Gell Moran signals his supporters in the audience chamber. A massive, confusing battle breaks out and action continues into the next scene.

EVIDENCE AND WITNESSES	DIFFICULTY
Have physical evidence and at least one eyewitness	1
Have physical evidence or at least one eyewitness	2
Can report evidence and hearsay supporting innocence, but no direct evidence or testimony	3
Have no evidence, and is making the argument on the strength of rhetoric or character alone	4
Attempting to fabricate or lie about evidence	5

OPTIONAL SCENE:
GUILTY!

In the unlikely event the heroes are found guilty, assuming the narrator and players simply do not wish to have them all suffer an ignoble execution, they will need to escape or prove themselves. While less than ideal, a valued ally might present new evidence on their behalf, or perhaps Joran Tai appears one more time to secure their release in exchange for some great future service they will no doubt dislike immensely. Maybe the heroes manage to escape and proceed to the next adventure, still on the run. In this rare instance, the narrator should work with the players to keep their misfortune from destroying their chances to continue the adventure and ultimately save the day.

SCENE 2.8: PERFIDY IN MY OWN COURT!

Adversaries: Gell Moran, 4 Elite Eidolon Guards, 2 Red Guards for every player character
Allies: Mors Kajak, potentially others

Gell Moran's signal calls armed minions to attack the heroes, and all subjects loyal to Mors Kajak. He plans to slay these troublesome heroes and the Jed of Lesser Helium, framing the heroes for Mors Kajak's death even as he takes control. The ensuing battle rages throughout the audience chamber, consisting of three sides. Gell Moran and his minions fight to help him escape while attempting to kill both Mors Kajak and the heroes. The heroes fight to survive, to protect the Jed, and to prevent the villain's escape. Meanwhile, dozens of nearby guards, confused and uncertain about what is happening, are attacked by those in their ranks loyal to Gell Moran, creating more chaos.

WHAT THE VILLAINS DO

At the beginning of the battle, the Elite Eidolon Guards — in fact royal bodyguards corrupted by Moran and arranged to be protecting the Jed today — attack Mors Kajak. Each hero is also attacked by 2 Red Guards who are loyal to Moran, who fight to both kill and to cover Gell Moran's escape. Gell Moran moves immediately toward a column that opens to reveal a secret door.

WHAT THE HEROES CAN DO

Apart from simply fighting for survival, the heroes have two clear goals: ensure the Jed's survival, and prevent Gell Moran's escape. The heroes begin within Immediate range of all combatants, while the elite guard are in Immediate range of their prime target, Mors Kajak.

Gell Moran will escape if any two consecutive rounds pass without a hero engaging him in direct conflict of some sort. Moran will also attempt escape the moment two or more of his elite guard are defeated. Stopping him from fleeing requires an opposed test with the hero's difficulty increased by 1. The specific kind of test depends on the hero's efforts. An attempt to call guards to block the path might call for **Passion** + **Reason**, while restraining the traitor would require **Daring** + **Might**. Moran escapes when he succeeds three times in this opposed test, with a spend of 2 Momentum counting as an additional success. The heroes prevent his exit by succeeding four times in their tests, again with 2 Momentum counting as an additional success. Moran is well prepared for his escape, and it is harder for the heroes to stop him than it is for him to flee.

Jed Mors Kajak, though a mighty fighter, will be hard-pressed to prevail after being ambushed by four of his most elite and trusted bodyguards, and cannot win a battle with them without assistance. Three rounds after the fight begins, he will receive a visible and painful wound. Three rounds after that, a second injury brings him to his knees. After a further two rounds, he is slain by his attackers… unless the heroes save him.

The heroes can stall this progress by one round for each round they directly engage the attackers, distracting them from assaulting the Jed. The heroes need only engage at least two of the attackers to stall the assault. Mors Kajak is more than able to fend off a pair of skilled attackers by going on the defensive, at least temporarily. Once the elite guards are defeated, the threat to the Jed is ended and the leader of Lesser Helium is able to quickly rally his guards to sweep in and dispatch any remaining Eidolon.

MOMENTUM

Heroes can spend momentum to bring allies into the fray. With the battle so broad and confusing, do not attempt to keep track of every combatant. Instead, 2 Momentum can be spent to recruit two loyal guards to the heroes' side, who will then battle and ultimately defeat 2 guards loyal to Moran and the Eidolon. This expenditure can also represent similar intervention to tie up enemy combatants, such as a loyal servant taking up a knife to valiantly defend their jed, or a group of allies arriving suddenly to assist. Reward player creativity by saying yes to the most flamboyant and swashbuckling ideas they can imagine.

THREAT

The narrator can spend Threat to bring additional Eidolon into the battle. For each Threat spent, 1 Eidolon Agent appears from the secret passage Moran opened and seeks to cover their superior's escape and help dispatch the Jed and the heroes.

This scene ends when the heroes have defeated their attackers, and those assaulting Mors Kajak. Any other fighting in the room will pause as everybody surveys the damage. Gell Moran will be dead, captured, or gone. Mors Kajak will be alive or dead. More importantly, the innocence of the heroes and the reality of the Eidolon threat will be firmly established by Gell Moran's treason.

USING TILES

This battle is all close quarters and chaos. Set up the heroes close to each other across two tiles. Mors Kajak is nearby, adjacent to four Elite Eidolon Guards, while each hero has two Red Guards nearby. Gell Moran is on the tile opposite Mors Kajak. A mix of other Red Guards are around the edges of both tiles, fighting amongst themselves when the conflict begins. If desired, the narrator can make this battleground larger, adding additional tiles, but the general arrangement of combatants should remain the same.

DROP DEAD JED

It is possible Mors Kajak could die during this adventure. This result doesn't follow Burroughsian canon but it does reinforce how dangerous and serious the situation is. Such a result would definitely make it clear to players that the campaign is their own and that even beloved and established characters are not safe from the dangers of Barsoom.

However, narrators who do not wish to orphan Dejah Thoris and leave Lesser Helium without its illustrious leader can instead have the Jed mortally wounded but not yet dead. The Jed lies in a comatose state, barely kept alive by Martian medical science but unable to rouse from near death. In this case, saving Mors Kajak is the task for another grand adventure, or may require the skills of Nalan Tir or some other great scientist who may be missing, kidnapped, or otherwise unavailable at the time.

EPILOGUE

As the heroes finish their fight, the sounds of battle from outside echo through the windows of the audience chamber. Eidolon agents have started multiple riots and small battles in the city while the Jed and his guard were occupied. Mors Kajak sends his troops to stop the fighting and sits with the heroes to discuss the threat.

Over the next several hours, messengers bring word that though the fighting in Helium has ceased, reports of civil unrest; rebellion, assassination, and outright war are coming in from across Barsoom. The Eidolon plot is in full swing, and all of Mars suffers because of it.

A short time later, news comes in from various cities across the planet. The nation of Kaol has fallen to the Eidolon and heads to war with Ptarth and its allies, including Helium. Moreover, a great airship was seen over the skies of Kaol, an odd sight given the nation's general lack of an airship navy. This massive ship is rumored to possess some great weapon capable of subjugating whole cities. Soon the heroes must stop this threat, or all of Barsoom will fall before the Eidolon…

REWARD

Regardless of how they end this adventure, the heroes are starting to reveal the Eidolon menace to Barsoom. If they clear their names and convince Mors Kajak of their innocence, they gain 5 experience and 2 renown. If they play a large part in saving Mors Kajak from harm they gain another 3 experience and 2 renown. If they produce additional information about the Eidolon, or gather several allies and the resources to oppose the Eidolon, they gain an additional 2 experience and 1 renown. If the heroes wish to purchase Mors Kajak as an ally at this time, they may do so. He is politically connected and personally exceptional, costing a base of 4 renown. If he is willing to provide his new allies with soldiers or ships, his cost increases (*see **John Carter of Mars** core book, Chapter 6: Growing Your Legend*).

PART 3: RAIDERS OF KAOL

Raiders of Kaol is the third part of an epic, four-part adventure for ***John Carter of Mars***. In this adventure, the heroes will further learn of the machinations of the Eidolon and their bid to take control of Barsoom.

A Brief History of the Eidolon

As the masterminds of the Eidolon conspiracy to conquer Barsoom reveal themselves and move to implement the final stages of their plot, the heroes must gather allies to oppose them and prevent the great leaders and luminaries of Helium and other nations from falling. The villains will stop at nothing to further their plans for world domination and their agents emerge from the shadows to strike, seeking to destroy or abduct whoever they cannot control. Only the heroes can save the nations of Barsoom from chaos and ruin.

- The Eidolon have destabilized much of the world and war is on the horizon in many places. Even in Helium, things are destabilized enough that it is currently hard to rally a large force. Thus, the heroes are tasked with exploring reports of a great airship docked in Kaol (a kingdom with typically few to no fliers). This is the base the Eidolon commander, Pharen Cul, has picked as a staging area for his plan.
- Kaol's ties to the Therns and the religion of Barsoom means both the Eidolon and the heroes' newfound Thern ally, Joran Tai, have access to various spies and secrets. Tai can use these resources to get the heroes into Kaol to investigate.
- This is a "Death Star raid" type adventure. Get in, rescue anyone still prisoner, face Pharen Cul for the first time, and then escape.
- While there, they will find the Eidolon have perfected their mind-control device, the Dominator Ray. The traitor in the midst of the party's allies will also reveal themselves, if they have not previously done so.
- The adventures ends when the device is complete and Pharen Cul is ready to take off and start blasting cities with his dreaded Dominator Ray. However, if the heroes enlist the help of a new ally, Thalia Dahl, they discover there is a vulnerability in the device that can be used to shut it down or destroy it, but it will not be easy to get to.

Where it all Begins

This chapter begins in the city of Greater Helium, where rumors of war are brewing and the city dwells in an atmosphere of pent-up anxiety. The heroes should have ideally played through *In the Shadows of Korvas* and *Traitors and Fugitives* but if not, they can be easily introduced into the adventure at this point.

From here, the heroes will travel to the forest city of Kaol, where they will discover that Pharen Cul has enslaved the entire city. Cul is preparing to launch his completed Dominator Ray and begin conquering the kingdoms of Barsoom. They will have the chance to face Cul and learn of his full plan, but will be unable to prevent him from seeing the launch of his device. They will learn, though, that the device has a weakness that they can take advantage of. This information will launch them into the final chapter of the adventure.

Bringing in the Heroes

It is assumed that the heroes have been involved in the earlier parts of this adventure. If that is not the case, they can become involved in these ways:

- The heroes may simply happen across rumors that there is a large battleship in Kaol. Knowing that Kaol has no real navy of its own, this might be enough to entice them into investigating.
- They could be traveling to Kaol on another unrelated matter—perhaps seeking a kidnapped paramour—and stumble upon the Eidolon's plans accidently when they discover their romantic interest has been mind-controlled.
- They could have a run-in with an agent of the Eidolon, even if they do not know about the group, who hints at the developments in Kaol.
- The heroes could be panthans hired by Tardos Mors or John Carter to investigate the strange goings-on in Kaol and return with what information they uncover.

If the heroes refuse to get involved, the narrator should remind players that ***John Carter of Mars*** is a game of romantic pulp heroism. Leaving mysteries unexplored or not facing threats to the wellbeing of the planet is dishonorable and unheroic. Leaping into action to aid others, even if they do not wholly succeed, is a pathway to adventure and rewards such as experience and renown. Refusing to act will profit them nothing.

Scene 3.1: War on the Horizon

Adversaries: Tomor Zhen
Allies: Joran Tai, Tardos Mors, John Carter, Dejah Thoris

The heroes are summoned to the council chambers in the palace of Tardos Mors, Jeddak of Helium. Here, they will have an audience with the Jeddak, John Carter, the Jedwar of Barsoom, the incomparable Dejah Thoris, and several nobles and servants. Standing beside the Jeddak is Joran Tai, the Holy Thern they met in *Traitors and Fugitives*. The Jeddak explains that he has received news from his agents that a large flier has been docked at the city of Kaol, an unusual situation, considering Kaol's small naval force. He suspects that this may be the work of the Eidolon, especially at it is well-known that a large number of Kaolians still hold on to the worship of Issus.

Mors will explain that he is unable to send any more of his own warriors because they are needed to protect Helium in the event of an attack by another city. John Carter will interject here and explain that he cannot be directly involved, as he and Dejah Thoris will be travelling to several red Martian cities to try and dissuade the jeds and jeddaks from declaring war on each other. Carter hopes they can undo some of the chaos sown by the Eidolon and bring peace back to the dying planet.

Mors explains that the heroes are Helium's, and indeed the entirety of Barsoom's, only hope in stopping the Eidolon's plans. Mors adds that Joran Tai has agreed to smuggle the heroes into Kaol using the secret passageways travelled by spies for the Holy Thern. It is clear Mors does not wholly trust the Thern, but these are desperate times and he has proven invaluable in providing Helium with information about the Eidolon and the threat they pose. If the heroes require transportation, John Carter will also offer one of his personal fliers to carry them to Kaol.

The heroes are also informed that any important captives or hostages the Eidolon have taken are likely being held in Kaol or onboard one of the ships docked there. To rescue them, they must travel to the distant kingdom. This list of possible hostages includes Nalan Tir, his children, anyone who aided them during their time as fugitives in the previous adventure, and any other important character who ended up a hostage of the Eidolon.

Playing Carter and Company

If the players are playing John Carter or other characters from the novels, then of course Carter and other player heroes are not here to greet them. In this case, replace Carter and Dejah with Mors Kajak and other important Heliumites and their allies.

What the Villains Do

Among those present in the audience chamber is an Eidolon spy named Tomor Zhen, a Thern loyal to the cause, disguised as a red Martian servant. He will listen to all that is said, take note of the heroes, and then slip away to rush and send word to Pharen Cul that resistance is on its way. The heroes have a minor chance of noting the spy slipping away by succeeding in a **Reason + Empathy** (D4) test, which may then lead to a chase through the palace, though the narrator should spend Threat to assist in the spy's escape.

What the Heroes Can Do

The heroes are, of course, expected to aid the Jeddak in his request. If they seem reluctant to help, or completely refuse, Dejah Thoris will implore their aid, further explaining that, without their assistance, Barsoom will once again plunge into bloody warfare, and return them all to the dark times before the coming of her husband, John Carter. Honorable heroes should at this point rise proudly to answer the call of aid from the beautiful princess. If they continue to resist, perhaps they are not the heroes Barsoom is in need of.

MOMENTUM

The heroes may spend Momentum here to secure additional aid, such as a few guardsmen, additional weapons, or other modest forms of support. Tardos Mors cannot spare much, given the situation, but the heroes are now well regarded and their mission is important. The cost of assistance varies based on what is asked for, though the guideline is 1 Momentum per minion-class character, and 1 or 2 Momentum for most special equipment.

THREAT

The narrator may use one threat to ensure that Tomor Zhen slips away unseen. Alternatively, if the heroes spot the spy and give chase, the narrator may use 3 Threat to allow the spy to disappear through one of the many secrets tunnels that exist within the Jeddak's palace, effectively ending pursuit.

SCENE 3.2: YOU ARE OUR ONLY HOPE

Adversaries: A Swarm of Mind-Controlled Sith
Allies: Joran Tai

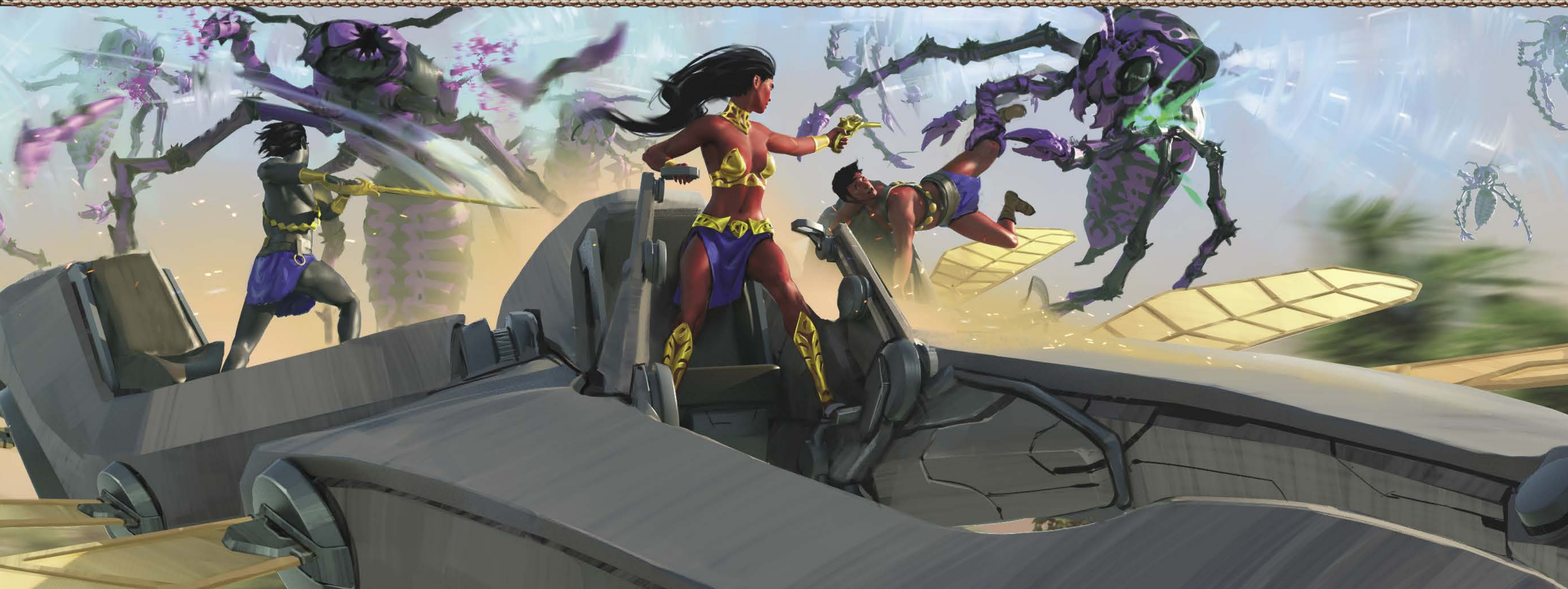
When the audience with the Jeddak is over, the heroes are led by John Carter and Dejah Thoris to the jedwar's private fleet on the rooftop of the palace. Here, they will be given the use of a small personal flier if they require, large enough for all the heroes and any allies they take with them. Otherwise the heroes' own flier will be docked here, ready for takeoff. Dejah Thoris will thank the heroes deeply, once again reminding them that they are Barsoom's only hope. She smiles gracefully at them, her beauty dizzying. With nothing more to say, the heroes should depart on the journey to Kaol.

A SWARM OF SITH

The journey to the Kaolian Forest will not take long, but as the heroes' flyer passes the border of the forest, they will hear an unusual buzzing which quickly rises in volume. If they succeed in a **Reason + Daring** (D2) test, they will spot a swarm of gigantic flying insects approaching from below in time to take an action and warn their companions. Otherwise, the coming attack will be a surprise. These creatures are sith, terrible insectoid horrors native to the region. Shortly, a swarm of sith comes into everyone's' view above the tree line, flying toward them. There is one Sith per two heroes, plus an additional one for Joran Tai or any other non-player allies present. Half the Sith will attack the heroes, while the others display unsettling intelligence by attacking the flyer directly, with intent to rupture the floatation tanks and ground the vessel. Once the flier is grounded, all remaining Sith will attack the heroes, not relenting until they have all been dispatched.

For the narrator, the objective of this scene is two-fold. The first is to ground the flier and force the heroes to continue on foot, making their journey more challenging and interesting. The second is to show the characters that the sith are acting unnaturally, pointing to the fact that the Eidolon have perfected their mind-control on animals.

Sith are extremely dangerous antagonists, so narrators should allow heroes to use Momentum cleverly to dispatch the pests, keeping in mind that their purpose is to ground the flier, not destroy the heroes.



What the Villains Do

The sith attack with alarming coordination, with half their number targeting the flier itself. Every round that at least one sith is allowed to attack the flier without a player attacking or otherwise drawing its attention, they will damage it noticeably. In addition, the narrator can spend Threat to do additional damage to the flier. Once the flier is damaged five times, it will begin to fall from the sky.

If the flier begins to fall, it will do 5 🎲 of damage to everyone on board, including any sith. This is further evidence the sith are acting unusually or being controlled; they ignore self-preservation to continue their assault. Characters may attempt to mitigate or reduce this damage by making an appropriate test based on their actions (**Daring + Might** to brace for impact, **Reason + Daring** to guide the flier in safely, etc.). Success reduces the damage by one die, plus one additional die for every 2 Momentum spent. Characters may spend Momentum on other players in this situation, their actions saving their companions from additional harm.

What the Heroes Can Do

The heroes are in for a tough fight. Sith are known for their deadly poison, and smart heroes will keep their distance and use their radium guns to dispatch the insects as quickly as possible. However, it is likely some close combat will be required, especially to dislodge those insects attacking the flier itself.

MOMENTUM

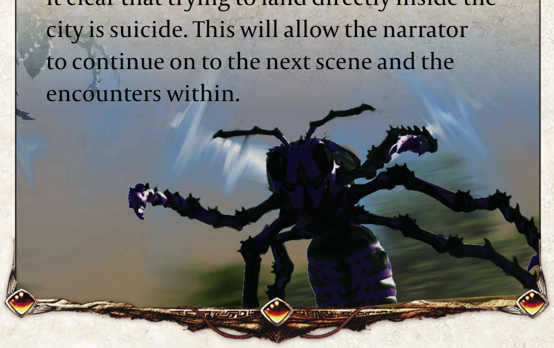
1 Momentum can be spent to realize that the sith are acting strangely out of character. If a character is stung, 2 Momentum can be used to avoid the deadly poison the sith tries to inject into them. Possibilities are that the sting completely penetrates the body and the poison was injected outside the wound, the sith had empty venom sacks, or the hero dodges the sting deftly and receives only a flesh wound.

THREAT

The narrator may use 2 Threat to ensure that the sith stings penetrate the hull of the flyer and pierce the ray tanks. It will take five successful penetrations to bring the flyer down quickly. 4 Threat may be used to have an unseen sith attack the flyer from the keel, penetrating the ray tanks unseen before climbing up onto the deck and joining its swarm-mates in attacking the heroes.

What if the Sith Do Not Succeed?

It is possible that the sith will not succeed in forcing the flyer to land, especially if the heroes are particularly resourceful or lucky in their die rolls. In this case, they may continue on to Kaol as before, but as they approach within sight of the city walls, the presence of various armed sentries, gun emplacements, and aerial patrols will make it clear that trying to land directly inside the city is suicide. This will allow the narrator to continue on to the next scene and the encounters within.



Using Tiles

If you are using tiles or maps for this encounter, the heroes should place themselves where they wish on the flyer. The sith will arrive at the bow of the flyer, and then disperse themselves among the heroes and flyer to complete their task.

Scene 3.3: Through the Forest

Adversaries:
A troop of Blue Gibbons,
pack of Tree Banths
Allies: Joran Tai

The heroes have been grounded by the attack of a swarm of sith. They have no choice but to travel through the Kaolian Forest on foot. While it would only have taken them a short time to arrive at Kaol by air, the journey by foot will take several days through the notoriously dangerous forest.

The Worst of Luck

Trudging through the Kaolian Forest is no easy matter, even when using the roads. The journey to Kaol will give the heroes some time to discuss what has occurred and perhaps come up with some conclusions. At some point during this journey, while the heroes are settling to camp for the evening, they will be harassed by a troop of blue gibbons. These creatures superficially resemble the smaller apes of Earth, except that they have blue hairless bodies, four arms, a shock of blue hair on their heads, and ears that sit atop their heads. Their relationship to the great white apes should be obvious, but they are not quite so deadly.

Most of the blue gibbons will pummel the heroes with rotten fruit, branches, and less savory materials, while keeping out of arms' reach in the trees. This allows a small number of their troop-mates to sneak into the camp and make off with any belongings that have been left untended, such as sleeping silks and furs, money pouches, weapons, and whatever else is easily carried away. Heroes will notice this deception with a **Cunning + Empathy** (D3) test, allowing them to spot the creatures attempting to run off with their supplies.

There are two Blue Gibbons for every hero and ally. Half the group will remain in the trees, pelting the heroes, while the other sneak into the camp to cause mischief.

This encounter is not meant to be dangerous, but treated as nuisance for the heroes, and as a precursor to a much more dangerous encounter. The creatures will not attack with harmful intent beyond stealing the heroes' supplies. The gibbons will attempt to flee with **Daring + Cunning** tests and the heroes can engage in opposed tests to prevent them. Success by the heroes retrieves one item, plus an additional item per Momentum spent. Sacks or pouches of small items, such as ammunition, count as a single item for this scene. Core equipment can only be seized by the gibbons if the narrator pays 3 Momentum to the character it is taken from.

As it appears that the blue gibbons are managing to divest the heroes of their belongings, the troop leader, a large male, will give out a warning cry, and the troop will disappear like spirits into the forest. This is an excellent chance for the heroes to use any Momentum they have to cause some of the blue gibbons to drop what they are carrying. These items can be collected later at the price of 1 Momentum per dropped item.

As the blue gibbons leave, the forest becomes unnaturally silent. Nothing makes a noise. Quickly, the heroes will glimpse fleeting movements in the trees, and hear piping calls coming from beyond sight. They are being stalked by tree banths; a smaller, arboreal cousin of the banth found hunting the foothills around the dead seas of Barsoom.

Tree banths look like thinner versions of ordinary banths, the difference between a Jasoomian lion and leopard. They have prehensile paws that help them climb, and their skin is deep purple with bright red tiger-like stripes, granting them excellent camouflage among the dark shadows of the forest. The males have short, bristly, bright-red manes.

There is one Tree Banth for every hero and ally, plus one additional one—a large alpha male who obviously dominates the group.

Unlike the blue gibbons, the tree banths have every intention of making a meal of the heroes. This should be an intense fight, with the tree banths leaping around the heroes, jumping from tree to ground, making an attack and then disappearing back into the trees. The tree banths will continue their attack until half of their number are dispatched, at which point they will flee into the deeps of the forest.

The narrator can use Threat here to make the tree banths difficult to strike and quick to attack, illustrating their nimbleness in their natural habitat. If any of the heroes are knocked unconscious, the tree banths will attempt to drag them into the trees to be feasted upon later, though another hero can prevent this automatically by attacking or otherwise engaging the beast.

BEASTLY CANON

Burroughs never actually wrote of blue gibbons or tree banths in the Carter stories, these are noncanonical beasts of Barsoom created for this adventure. However, they are modeled after existing beasts in the Carter stories. For narrators running games that strictly adhere to the canon of the Carter novels, these creatures can be replaced with suitable creatures from the *Beasts of Barsoom* chapter of the ***John Carter of Mars*** core book.

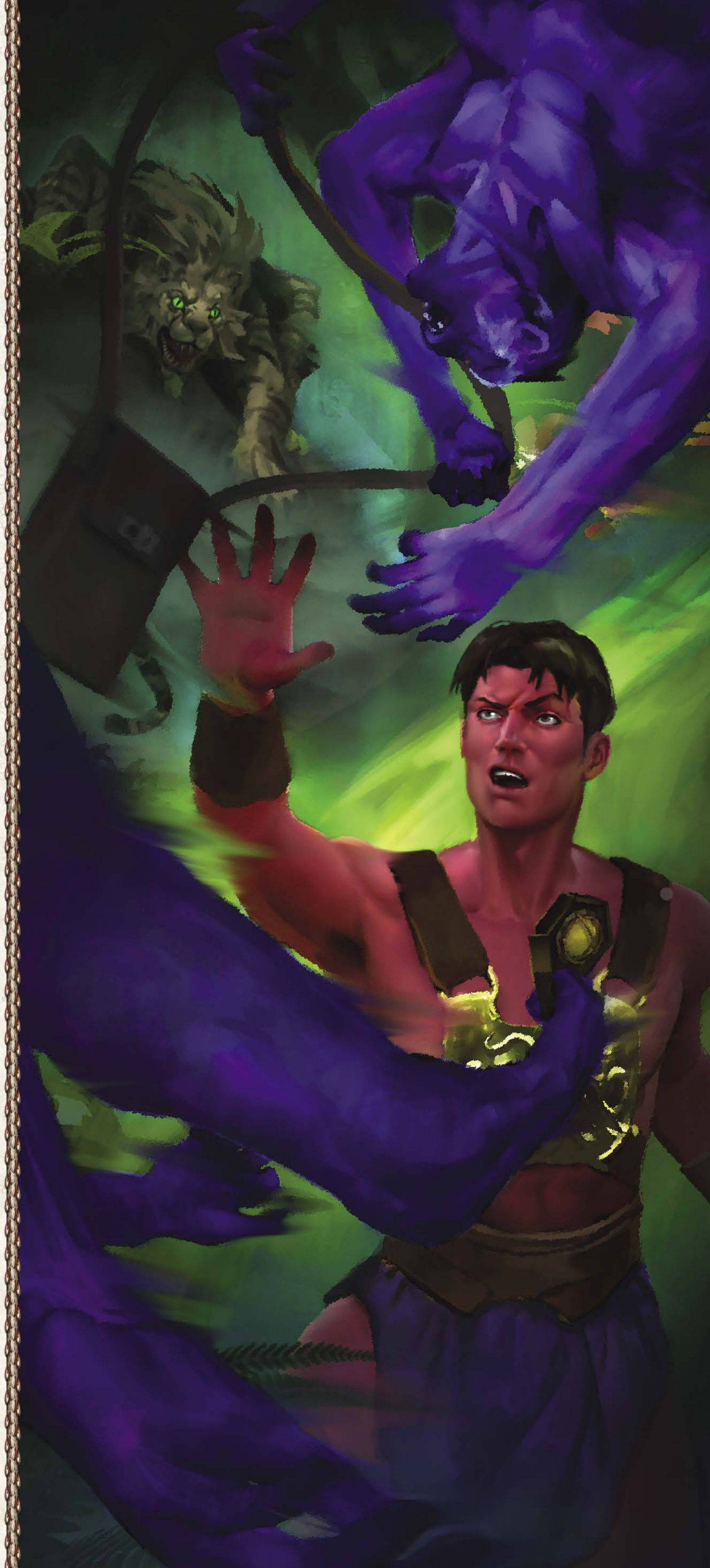
WHAT THE HEROES CAN DO

While the encounter with the blue gibbons is intended to be a light and somewhat amusing distraction, the encounter with the tree banths should be of concern to the heroes. These smaller, arboreal relatives of the common banth are cunning adversaries, familiar with the forest and well known for their teamwork and ruthless tactics.

MOMENTUM

As mentioned earlier, heroes may use 1 Momentum to knock one their belongings out of the blue gibbons' hands. These items fall to the ground, where they are easily retrieved.

Curious heroes can also spend 1 Momentum to realize that the beasts in these encounters are



not being controlled. For an additional Momentum, they confirm this means the Eidolon's control process does not cover a whole area, but must be targeted on a specific group. This suggests their process is formidable, but still has some limitations.

THREAT

The narrator may use one Threat to allow a Blue Gibbon to distract a hero and allow one of its companions to steal something directly off their person. One threat may be used to allow either a Blue Gibbon or Tree Banth to avoid damage by using tree branches as cover. Two Threat can be used to ensure that the group of Blue Gibbons entering the heroes' camp are undetected. Two Threat may also be used to keep the total number of Tree Banths secret from the Heroes as they use the cover of the trees to their advantage.

WHERE IS MY STUFF?

After the battle, the heroes can easily scout about to gather up their lost equipment, if desired. The gibbons dropped much of it in a panic when they sensed the banths, and it is now scattered throughout the nearby trees and brush. Allow heroes to make a **Cunning + Reason** test (D2) to locate the abandoned gear. Success retrieves an item, with one additional item recovered per extra Momentum spent.

Any core equipment searched for is automatically found at the end of this scene.

USING TILES

If you are using tiles or maps for this encounter, the heroes should be placed in the center of the tile, either on a road or clearing. The blue gibbons and tree banths will surround the heroes. The narrator should be careful in how they place the adversaries on the table, ensuring the players can only see the ones that are visible to their characters at the time.

SCENE 3.4: A NASTY SURPRISE

Adversaries: Kaolian Red Guards, Pharen Cul, Kulan Tith
Allies: Joran Tai

The heroes eventually arrive at the city of Kaol, perhaps worse for wear and hoping for an easy entry into the city. Unfortunately, things are just going to get harder for the heroes, as they soon discover that they have been betrayed and that their arrival has been expected.

THE WALLS OF KAOL

The seventy-five foot tall walls of Kaol will eventually come into view, towering over the trees in the forest. The walls are as smooth as glass, making them impossible to climb, and the gates are heavily guarded by Kaolian warriors. Further there are additional forces everywhere, and above the city floats a massive battleship and several smaller craft, notable additions to the skies over a city that boasts little air power.

If the heroes do not suggest it first, Joran Tai will propose that it may be advantageous for the group to continue after dark so that they can access the secret entrance used by Holy Thern spies without being seen. Unbeknownst to the heroes, or even to Joran Tai, Pharen Cul suspects any intruders will enter Kaol by the Thern passages and has set numerous guards at each one. As Joran Tai opens a hidden door in the wall of Kaol, a squad of warriors will charge out and attack the heroes.

There will be two Red Guards for each hero and ally. They intend to capture the heroes to be brought to Pharen Cul. It should be made clear to the heroes that they have no chance of beating the guards here, as when they dispatch one, another will rush to take his place. It is also clear the guards are not attacking with the intent to kill, instead trying to subdue the heroes. If the heroes attempt to flee, they will find more guards have circled around from somewhere in the tunnels and cut off their escape.

While this combat takes place, but before the heroes are cut off, Joran Tai will quietly disappear, leaving the heroes to their fate. While the heroes may come to the conclusion that the Thern has betrayed them, this is not the case. Joran has no particular loyalty toward the heroes, but it does not suit his purposes to betray them at the present time. Furthermore, he cannot risk being captured by Pharen Cul, as the Eidolon leader will most likely put him to death immediately. For the time being, Joran Tai's association with the heroes ends here, but they may not have seen the last of him.

Once the heroes are subdued, they will be stripped of their weapons and led through the city towards the palace of Kulan Tith, the Jeddak of Kaol. As they are marched closer, they will see a great flier docked at the palace. Several smaller scout fliers buzz around it, obviously acting as guards to prevent any sabotage.

The people on the streets act normally, though the heroes will notice that there are a larger number of warriors present than one would normally expect. It is obvious to any warrior amidst the heroes that Kaol is indeed preparing to go to war.

The heroes are taken to the council chamber of the palace to be presented to the Jeddak. As they are led into the chamber, they see Kulan Tith, sitting on his throne atop a dais. Standing to the Jeddak's right is Pharen Cul, the masked leader of the Eidolon. Accompanying him are numerous Eidolon guards and agents, including a vaguely familiar Thern (the spy from Tardos Mors' palace). The Thern will whisper something to Pharen Cul, who will then point to the heroes and proclaim them as the ones who intend to stop the unification of Barsoom under the great city of Kaol.

Any other notable Eidolon from earlier adventures can be present at the narrator's discretion, as this is a stronghold for the conspiracy.

Kulan Tith will be furious at the heroes. He will rave at their audacity for attempting to infiltrate his city as spies and saboteurs. Any protests or attempts to convince the Jeddak cannot truly succeed, due to the mental sway the Eidolon hold him under, though an **Empathy + Passion** (D3) test can cause the Jeddak to temporarily pause and soften before Pharen Cul (or another important Eidolon present) whispers to Tith.

Pharen Cul will allow the Jeddak to vent his anger, but will then interrupt, quietly suggesting that they be sent to the tunnels, where he will attempt to persuade them to the Jeddak's cause. Cul will further explain that if he is unable to convince them, they will be disposed of in some unpleasant way. He will also demand they reveal the whereabouts of the Thern who aided them in their attempt to infiltrate the city, suggesting the absent Joran Tai did not betray the heroes.

Kulan Tith will appear confused for a moment, as if struggling with the suggestions, but then he will agree with Pharen Cul. The Eidolon leader will smile smugly at the heroes and begin gloating. He will boast that the Eidolon have agents in almost every kingdom of Barsoom, and that the heroes' feeble attempt at stopping the movement had no chance of succeeding. He will continue by telling the heroes that "soon even those who oppose us will rush to join our ranks." With that, he will order the guards to take the heroes into the tunnels for him to deal with later.

It should be obvious to the heroes that Kulan Tith is under the sway of the Eidolon. He has never been a warmonger, and has had no interest in expanding his territories. Pharen Cul has used the prototype version of his Dominator Ray to bring the Jeddak under his sway, but Kulan Tith has proved more difficult to control than he anticipated, hence the ruse of Kaol expanding to control all of Barsoom to bring peace and prosperity.

WHAT THE HEROES CAN DO

The heroes, being what they are, may try to escape at some point during this scenario before meeting Kulan Tith, especially during the initial entry. It should become obvious to them that, between the numerous guards and the Eidolon forces present, they are outnumbered and outmatched for the moment. They may surrender, not exactly a heroic choice, but one that will allow them to fight another day; flee, an often dishonorable but at times pragmatic choice; or be beaten to subdual and dragged before Kulan Tith. In any event, it is very likely they will temporarily be captured during this scene.

The heroes should be given a chance to recognize the unnamed Thern who, disguised as a red Martian slave, was present in the council chambers when Tardos Mors asked the heroes for their assistance. This is a **Reason + Empathy** (D2) test and discovering this ruse further explains how the heroes walked into a trap.

The heroes may be tempted to make an escape attempt while being presented to the Jeddak and Pharen Cul. While certainly a brave move worthy of heroes, it should be obvious to them that they have little chance of defending themselves against such adversaries and their superior numbers without the advantage of their weapons.

MOMENTUM

Heroes can spend 1 Momentum to notice Kulan Tith is clearly being controlled by some insidious method of brainwashing or mental domination. For 2 more Momentum, they can realize the process seems to be imperfect, resulting in a distracted victim that, at times, seeks to break their conditioning, suggesting a process that requires frequent reconditioning.

THREAT

The narrator should spend Threat to protect Pharen Cul and subdue the heroes in the tunnels, should they attempt escape after. This represents the strength of the villain's position in Kaol, currently an Eidolon stronghold. Otherwise, this scene can play out as it will. If necessary, the narrator may spend 1 Threat to summon two additional minions or one monster-class adversary to join a scene. These may be Red Guards or Eidolon Agents, including the mind-controlled beasts found in earlier adventures. With Kaol under Pharen Cul's direct occupation, there are few resources the Eidolon cannot easily bring to bear here.

USING TILES

If you are using tiles or maps for this encounter, the heroes should be in the middle of the tile. Kulan Tith, Pharen Cul, and any other Eidolon characters of note should be at one edge, with one Red Guard standing behind each hero.

SCENE 3.5: THE TUNNELS OF KAOL

Adversaries: Kaolian Red Guard, Pharen Cul
Allies: Thalia Dahl

The heroes are taken to the tunnels deep beneath the palace. They will be placed in a large cell where they are chained to the wall and floor. In the cell with them is a beautiful red Martian woman. Once the guards leave and the cell is plunged back into darkness, the woman will introduce herself as Thalia Dahl, the daughter of an influential Kaolian chieftain and former advisor to Kulan Tith. She will explain that she has been imprisoned in the pits, as she was able to resist the Dominator Ray and sought to warn others of the threat the Eidolon posed. She will ask the heroes where they hail from and what their purpose is.

If the heroes are open with Thalia, she will explain to them that Pharen Cul will no doubt use his device on them to place them under his control. She will further explain that her father is also under Pharen Cul's control, as is the Jeddak of Kaol, and the Eidolon are using him to further his plans to dominate the peoples of Barsoom.

Lastly, Thalia will add that she has learned of a weakness in the device that can be used to stop Pharen Cul once and for all, but her knowledge is useless while trapped here in the tunnels. The heroes should realize that they have no option but to escape and use the information Thalia has to stop the Eidolon, though if they do not realize this, she will offer to escape with them and tell them the secret of the Dominator Ray. If pressed for the information now, she will share it. See *The Weakness* sidebar.

The chains holding the heroes will prove to be almost impossible to break, requiring a **Might + Passion** (D5) test, so their best chance of escape will be waiting until they are to be taken to Pharen Cul and his nefarious device.

The heroes will not have long to wait, as two guards will soon arrive, accompanied by the Thern spy, Tomor Zhen. The spy will gloat that he was able to operate directly under Tardos Mors' nose and that Pharen Cul is aware of all of the Jeddak of Helium's plans. He continues by adding that the Dominator Ray has been perfected and is even now being installed in the Eidolon's great flagship, the *Malagor*. Once the device is in place, it can be used to dominate whole cities in minutes and that the Eidolon's plans have almost reached fruition. Once the heroes are under his control, nothing will be able to stop the Eidolon and their total control of Barsoom. The spy will also gloat as he reveals any hostages the heroes came here to free are also on board the *Malagor*, where their fates will be decided by Pharen Cul once the ship is underway.

His monologue complete, Tomor Zhen will approach Thalia and take her chin in his hand. He informs her that her own execution is scheduled, unless she can give him some reason to keep her alive. The narrator should play the spy's offer to invoke the heroes' emotions. Whether the spy wishes blind obedience, for Thalia to betray her people, or has some personal and salacious interest in the woman, it is clear that he expects and desires her acquiesce.

In response, Thalia will jerk her chin free of his grasp and declare that she would rather marry a calot than spend one more moment in the Thern's presence. The spy will rise his hand to slap the Kaolian princess, who does not shy away from his threat and prepares to defend herself as best she can while chained. The spy will pause, smile, and state she will regret her answer soon enough.

Turning back to the guards, the spy will point to one of the heroes and order them brought along as he walks to the door to leave the room. When the hero is freed, they have a chance to overpower the guards.

WHAT THE HEROES CAN DO

The freed hero should take the lead in helping start the escape and acts first, probably by attacking or overpowering one or both of the guards. The guards and Tomor Zhen go next, with the chained heroes acting last. Heroes who are not being freed should be allowed to assist the escaping hero in whatever manner sounds reasonable, including spending Momentum to improve their chances or alter the scene in minor but useful ways. They may also act to distract or otherwise aid their companion, possibly even joining in if they can lure one of the guards close enough. If necessary, Momentum can be spent so the guards slip up and get too close, stumble and drop their keys, or otherwise make some dire error the heroes can capitalize on.

There is virtually no chance that even chained heroes cannot overpower two minion-class combatants such as the Red Guards. The only question is how they do it and how long it takes them.

Tomor Zhen, being a coward and opportunist, will not wait around long enough to see the outcome of the combat. He will fire a single shot at the escaping hero and then flee as quickly as he can. Heroes seeking to stop him must give chase and engage in a series of **Daring + Might**, threshold 5, challenges against the spy to catch up to him and block his exit.

A BIT OF BURROUGHS

The presence of Thalia in this scene is largely to provide the heroes with a very Burroughsian character and event: the heroic Martian noblewoman menaced by the power-hungry, yet cowardly, villain. The heroine herself is capable and bold, but she's in a bad spot and needs help. Of course, she also possesses useful information and assistance for the heroes. She may become romantically interested in a hero who shows both interest and exceptional qualities. If this classic Barsoomian tale will not play well with the group or adventure as narrators are presenting it, she can be replaced or altered as desired.

As the spy has a head start, the hero's difficulty on this test is (D2), while the spy's is (D1). Narrators should remind players the hero can succeed at cost and catch up with Zhen, but they do so by putting themselves in further jeopardy, such as taking a shot from the spy's pistol or losing any weapon found in their escape.

If the spy is caught, the hero must defeat him in combat. Zhen is likely inferior to most heroes in battle, but well armed and treacherous. If Zhen wins the fight, he runs off to raise the alarm, leaving the hero for dead. The other heroes can retrieve their companion when they free themselves, or, if desired they may be grabbed by the guards and removed from the adventure for now, only to appear as prisoners onboard the *Malagor* in *Part 4: Specters of the Mind.*

If Tomor Zhen is left to flee, he will raise the alarm shortly and the heroes must quickly leave before guards arrive to again subdue them. As the guards have keys to unlock their chains and Thalia knows a way to escape the dungeons, they must succeed at a **Daring + Cunning** (D1) test to free themselves and escape the immediate area before the guards return. Momentum earned on this test can be used to recover equipment at the cost of 1 Momentum per piece of significant gear.

MOMENTUM

A hero may use 1 Momentum to surreptitiously take a dagger or similar small weapon from a guard as they are being freed. 1 Momentum may be used by a hero to trip, entangle, or distract a guard, causing them to act last after the heroes. 2 Momentum may be used to knock the keys from the guard's hand and have them land within reach of another hero.

A Helping Hand

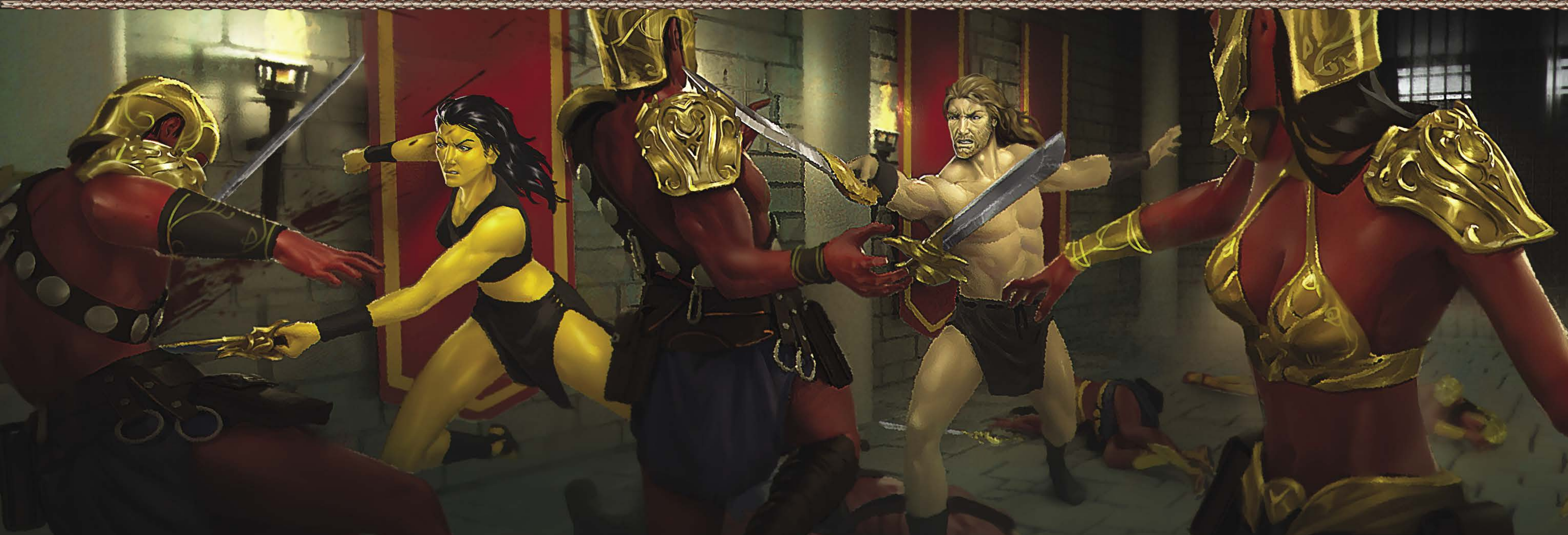
If the heroes are having a hard time escaping, or seem unable to accomplish it on their own, now is an excellent opportunity to allow Joran Tai to make his reappearance. He arrives to assist the heroes, in the nick of time. He will have their weapons with him, which he will return, and explain that once he saw the ambush at the secret entrance, he knew that they had been betrayed. With no obvious chance of escaping the guards, he secreted himself away to be available to assist an escape.

What the Villains Can Do

The Eidolon spy, Tomor Zhen, has no interest in facing the heroes directly or fairly. If allowed to escape, he will flee as quickly as he can to report to his master, Pharen Cul. This will cause Cul to move his timetable forward and launch his battleship a little earlier than he had hoped. This will not impact his plan greatly; just make him angry at the inconvenience. He is arrogant enough to believe that there is no way the heroes can possibly stop him now, so he does not set any additional guards around his battleship. After all, who could possibly sneak aboard a fully manned flyer without being seen?

Using Tiles

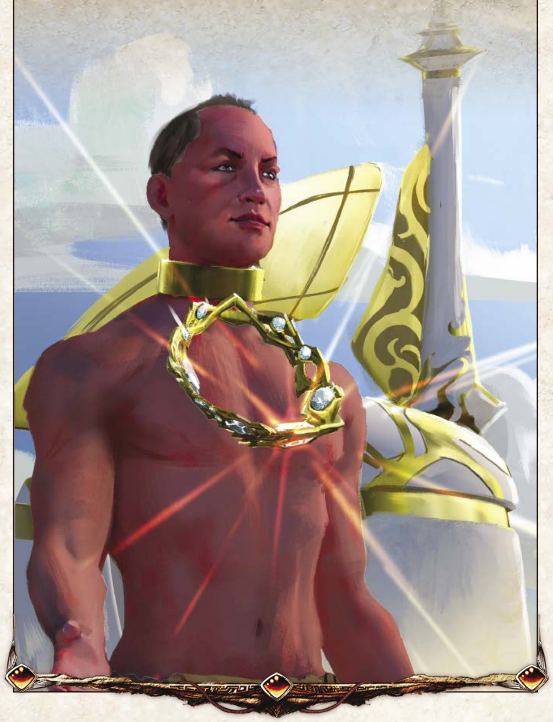
If you are using tiles or maps for this encounter, the heroes should be placed against the wall opposite the doorway. Thalia Dahl will be in a corner furthest from the door. The guards should be placed close to the hero being freed. The spy should be placed near Thalia.



THE WEAKNESS

What Thalia has discovered is that the mind-control device can only be activated and channeled by the diadem worn by the keepers of the atmosphere plant. The device focuses telepathic energy through the gem, creating a beam that can be used to either control the mind of a single individual, or control the minds of every person caught in its path. The diadem is now being installed into the Dominator Ray aboard the Eidolon flagship, the *Malagor*, and if it is damaged, stolen, or otherwise removed, the device will cease to function.

There are only two such gems on the face of Barsoom. They were once only worn by two men, those who would take six-month shifts to operate and guard the atmosphere plant. One such diadem was lost, only to reappear in the Valley Dor in the possession of a Holy Thern. It was in Dor that Pharen Cul discovered the gem and, ultimately, its use.



SCENE 3.6: THE ESCAPE

Adversaries: Red Guards, Eidolon Agents
Allies: Joran Tai, Thalia Dahl

With the guards disposed of and the heroes free, Thalia Dahl will ask to be freed from her chains, if not already liberated. Thalia declares her unending admiration and gratitude for their kindness, and asks them what she should do next. She is willing to go with the heroes in their quest to stop the device, but she will also attempt to escape the city and bring allies and assistance to the heroes if they wish. In either event, she now shares the secret of the mind-control device (*see The Weakness sidebar*) and states if they destroy or remove the diadem they should be able to disable the Eidolon's terrible machine.

Thalia can easily guide the heroes through the tunnels and secret passageways to where the *Malagor* is docked. The massive airship is moored above the palace's recently constructed landing platforms, as smaller fliers move between it and the ground, carrying supplies and personnel. Heroes face no opposition until they leave the tunnels and arrive at the open-air dock on the highest towers of Kulan Tith's palace. Here, they can get a close-up look at the huge battleship that Pharen Cul has under his control—an enormous vessel easily able to carry thousands of crew. Hundreds of guns line her broadsides and at the bow is a large weapon the likes of which the heroes have never seen: Pharen Cul's Dominator Ray.

Characters making a **Cunning + Reason** (D2) check will realize there is no practical way to defeat such a vessel from the outside without a massive naval assault. For 2 Momentum, they will also realize that, despite the groups' power, such a vehicle and its assembled escort of smaller ships must constitute the bulk of resources the Eidolon possess. Crippling or disabling the *Malagor* will cripple the organization and if they can bring down Pharen Cul in the process, they can destroy the Eidolon threat—if only they can get aboard.

The heroes will see that the crew are hurrying to secure the fleet of scout flyers on the open deck as dock workers can be seen untying the mooring ropes and airmen are leaping aboard. It is obvious that the *Malagor* is about to leave port. They need to decide what they will do, and quickly.

WINNING BY LOSING

If the traitorous twin or some other ally secretly an Eidolon agent from earlier parts of ***Phantoms of Mars*** is still active and has yet to reveal themselves, they can be a shocking reveal at this time. Provided they are with the heroes, they can alter the Eidolon's plans or otherwise lead the characters into an ambush on the docks. This will lead to the traitor mockingly declaring that the heroes have lost their "final chance to defeat us" even as their hubris convinces them the best place to take the heroes is the brig of the waiting *Malagor*.

Narrators should only use this option if it is dramatically interesting, or as a backhanded way to assist a group that seems lost as to how to proceed. Do not use it as a "gotcha" to sabotage heroes who are trying to handle things themselves. Essentially, this is an elaborate success at cost; they get on board and where they need to be to stop the Eidolon, but they do so by being imprisoned.

WHAT THE HEROES CAN DO

The heroes have a few options in this scene that they can choose to take, though they do not have very long to make their decision. These options are relatively simple for a group of resourceful heroes, with just enough of a margin for error to keep things interesting.

It should be obvious to them that an open assault of the *Malagor* would be suicide, as the foes present are functionally endless, though the narrator should not try to prevent the heroes from taking that route if they choose. If that is the case, the narrator should see that the heroes are incapacitated and taken aboard the *Malagor* to face Pharen Cul's wrath. In this case, they will awaken, imprisoned aboard the *Malagor*, in *Part 4: Specters of the Mind.*

Alternatively, the heroes may attempt to sneak aboard the flyer, either openly or surreptitiously. There are two main ways to accomplish this: posing as Eidolon agents to sneak aboard, or hiding among the supplies being loaded onto the ship. Both of these plans have an excellent chance of succeeding, since the chaos of preparing and loading the ship means little attention is being paid to a single group or stock of supplies, provided they are not obviously out of place.

Posing as Eidolon agents requires subduing a number of Eidolon Agents so they may acquire their uniforms and masks. By making an **Empathy + Reason** (D1) test, the heroes can lure an Eidolon Agent behind some crates or into another out-of-the-way area. Heroes may spend 1 Momentum to lure an additional Eidolon Agent to their ambush, allowing them to quickly gain the disguises they desire. The heroes then get a free action to attempt to defeat their targets, who are caught unaware by the heroes' actions. If they cannot defeat their foes in this time, the narrator should begin a regular combat and allow the heroes to go first. However, the Eidolon's first action will be to raise the alarm, bringing two Eidolon Agents for every hero, with even more able to be summoned. At this point, the heroes will likely need to retreat.

The other option is to try to sneak aboard unseen to hide within the lower decks. While the fliers themselves are too small and tightly crewed to hide in, many of them are carrying cargo containers with supplies. These crates, barrels, and other containers can be hidden in quite easily, assuming the heroes can avoid notice while they hide. Sneaking into these containers unnoticed and stowing away inside is a **Cunning + Empathy** (D2), threshold 8, challenge. Failing a roll entirely summons a pair of Eidolon agents to investigate, causing the hero who failed the roll to make a **Daring + Reason** (D3) test to quickly hide, disable their foe, or otherwise prevent discovery.

It is also possible that, rather than board the *Malagor* now, the heroes may decide to steal a flier and flee, seeking to gain allies and assistance and return to infiltrate the ship while it is in flight. This option is covered in *Part 4: Specters of the Mind*, but it first requires the heroes sneaking onto a flier and disabling the crew. If they do so, they can leave quite easily. Again, there is just too much activity to track one small flier slipping away. Narrators can run this option as a **Daring + Cunning** test to sneak on board a flier and then a quick fight against a crew equal to one Eidolon Agent for every hero. Given that the fight is taking place in a flier and not out in the open, if the heroes can defeat their foes in three turns or less, no one will notice.

MOMENTUM

Narrators should allow the heroes to use their Momentum creatively in this scene for the purpose of getting them on board the *Malagor*. Some examples would be using 1 Momentum to convincingly persuade guards that they are crewmen, or 2 Momentum to sneak about the docks unseen.

USING TILES

If you are using tiles or maps for this encounter, the heroes should be placed as far away from the *Malagor* as possible. The *Malagor* will be at the edge of the tiles.

EPILOGUE

Unless they have somehow found a way to flee or escape Kaol, this chapter should end with the heroes aboard the *Malagor*, either in hiding, or captured. They should have discovered valuable information on how to disable the Dominator Ray, and earned a faithful ally in Thalia Dahl. This will place the heroes in an excellent position to move on to the next part of this adventure and finally face Pharen Cul.

Narrators should describe the hulking battleship pulling away from Kaol into the skies beyond. After a short time, the heroes on board the *Malagor* or nearby feel a low buzzing in their skulls, as if barely audible radio static is being beamed into their brains. The Eidolon have activated the Dominator Ray and turned it on the city of Kaol. Where, before, the citizens were duped by the control and undermining of their Jeddak, now the whole city-state of Kaol feels their wills fall to the crushing might of the nefarious device. Meanwhile, throughout the planet, Eidolon sabotage, assassinations, and other actions make it unlikely any nation can rally the necessary forces to oppose Pharen Cul and his followers. Unless the heroes can save the day, the fate of Kaol will soon be the fate of all the great cities of Barsoom.

REWARDS

Player heroes should receive 5 experience for this adventure. If they did particularly well, freeing themselves from imprisonment, roleplayed well with narrator characters, or acted in a manner that would exemplify them as individuals worthy of the title 'hero,' they receive a bonus award of 1 or 2 experience.

Renown rewards are a bit less static. The heroes should gain 2 renown if they performed admirably during the adventure, but their actions for now are largely unknown to the outside world. Unfortunately, the Eidolon are well aware of the heroes' involvement now, and word of their deeds is spreading. Like some earlier adventures, the major renown rewards will come later, once the true and full story of their heroism is known.

PART 4: SPECTERS OF THE MIND

Spectrers of the Mind is the finale of the ***Phantoms of Mars*** four-part adventure that began with *In the Shadows of Korvas*. In the previous chapters, the heroes faced battle across Barsoom, searching for a way to stop a villainous plot. Now they must save Barsoom from a terrible fate.

What Happened Before

Discovering a grand conspiracy to conquer Barsoom by a group known as the Eidolon, the heroes find themselves facing an insidious group of spies, infiltrators, and insurgents. Masters of manipulation and brainwashing, the Eidolon and their spies are everywhere, ready to strike from the shadows at the heroes and their allies.

As the Eidolon seek to use their ultimate weapon, the Dominator Ray, to take control of the minds of large sections of the planet's population, the heroes must infiltrate the Eidolon's massive flagship, the *Malagor*, disabling the Dominator Ray and defeating the Eidolon and their leader, the deadly and treacherous Pharen Cul.

Where it all Begins

How the heroes begin this adventure depends on where they ended up in the previous one. They are likely near, or even aboard, the *Malagor* as it departs, but they could also have left the ship before it took off, either driven off by Eidolon forces, leaving to rally allies and support, or escaping voluntarily to escort rescued hostages to safety in a nearby friendly location.

Meanwhile, the Eidolon begin their campaign of terror with Kaol, firing the Dominator Ray into crowded areas of the city. After sufficient population in Kaol is controlled, the ship moves on toward nearby cities. As Eidolon-dominated and loyal, free citizens of Barsoom begin a battle for the fate of the planet, the heroes are the only chance to destroy the villains and their infernal device.

Narrators should describe to the heroes the dire effects of the Dominator Ray—cities in chaos as dominated crowds riot and seek to overthrow those few who remain uncontrolled. Free individuals are either slain or dragged into open air and restrained until the device does its work, stripping them of free will and making them mind-slaves to the Eidolon.

Resisting the Ray

Its unlikely, but possible, that the heroes find themselves in an area being affected by the Dominator Ray before they reach the *Malagor* and the main part of this adventure. In this case, they begin to hear a low thrumming in their head, followed by a mild headache. All difficulties requiring concentration and focus are increased by 1 until they are free of the ray's area of effect. Earthborn, with their strange resistance to telepathy and similar effects, are immune to this effect.

The player characters, being heroes, are too inherently strong-willed to feel any effect of the ray beyond this for some time. They can escape the area and move on to the *Malagor* while others are falling under the Dominator Ray's influence. Narrators wishing to further challenge their group can spend Threat to create problems for the heroes in the form of mind-dominated Martians and dangers caused by the ensuing chaos, but such encounters should be brief, as the nefarious Pharen Cul and his Eidolon need dealing with.

Scene 4.1: Aboard the Malagor

Adversaries: Various Eidolon Forces
Allies: Possible (see description)

The possible opening scenes of this adventure are quite different, depending on how the characters ended the last adventure, involving different challenges and opposition. In any case, the heroes must reach the labyrinthine interior of the *Malagor* so they can make their way to the ship's command center and destroy the Eidolon's dreaded Dominator Ray.

If the Heroes are on Board the Malagor as Prisoners

If the heroes are prisoners onboard the *Malagor*, they must escape their cells, arm themselves, and prepare to make their way past the ship's crew to disable the Dominator Ray and defeat Pharen Cul forever.

Escaping their cell requires waiting until they are alone and either passing a **Reason + Cunning** (D2) test to pick or otherwise open the lock, or a **Might + Passion** (D4) test to bust out with raw strength. The latter option makes a lot of noise, bringing two Eidolon Agents for every hero.

Heroes are in their cells alongside any ally characters who accompanied them at the end of the last adventure. The exception to this is Nalan Tir and his children. If any of them were with the heroes, they are missing. Pharen Cul needs the scientist or his children to help operate the Dominator Ray.

If desired, heroes may spend 2 Momentum to find an ally of theirs sharing a cell with them. This must still follow common sense, and the narrator can veto the presence of an ally that could not realistically be imprisoned by the Eidolon. However, if the heroes asked an ally for assistance in dealing the Eidolon in earlier adventurers, they could be captured and held here. In the case of allies defined as a larger group, they may find a monster-level officer or other leader type of the organization imprisoned with them, such as a dwar of the Helium navy. For any additional 2 Momentum, a squad of five minion-class subordinates can be imprisoned with the ally, able to render assistance alongside their leader.

If the Heroes are Hidden Aboard the Malagor

If the heroes stowed away on the *Malagor* at the end of the last adventure, they find themselves an unused section of the ship's hold to plan their next move. They will need to fight or sneak their way past the ship's crew to disable the Dominator Ray and defeat Pharen Cul.

If the heroes are hidden onboard, but the Eidolon know they are somewhere on the ship, then patrols will be on alert and a search of the ship is in progress. In this case, increase any difficulties during this adventure to sneak past guards, or otherwise move covertly, by 1.

Heroes who already managed to infiltrate the *Malagor* have it the easiest, but they still must sneak past or disable two Eidolon Agents standing guard near their hiding spot. These minion-class foes are little challenge, but if they are engaged in combat and not defeated in the first turn they will cry for aid, bringing four more Eidolon Agents, led by an Elite Eidolon Guard, within two turns. The heroes will either need to defeat these new arrivals or find some creative way to get past them, such as hiding the bodies and posing as guards, or finding a new hiding place so they can simply disappear and wait for their foes to move on.

If the Heroes are Elsewhere

If the heroes are outside the ship, then their first step should be to make a plan to get onboard the *Malagor* and destroy Pharen Cul, disable the Dominator Ray, and end the Eidolon threat. Allies and titles which give access to military resources are especially useful here, as it is suicide to attempt to board the *Malagor* without some sort of distraction. In addition to the ship's several gun batteries, it also has several other small warships serving as an escort.

Due to the chaos spread by the Eidolon and their agents recently, it is all but impossible for the heroes to rally a force large enough to destroy the *Malagor*. However, they can either gather a small, but effective, force from among their closest allies and followers, or they can attempt an infiltration on their own. In either case, they will need to land a small flier on the *Malagor* or otherwise get close enough to board the gigantic warship.

Sneaking past the *Malagor*'s sensors and lookouts in an airship requires a **Cunning + Reason** (D3) test. Success means they manage to effectively put down on a landing pad or outside deck and must contend with a small contingent of guards before continuing. There is one Eidolon Agent for each player character and ally present. After defeating these foes, the heroes can enter the *Malagor* through a nearby hatch.

Failing to quietly approach means the heroes' airship is riddled with massed fire from the battleship. The heroes can spend 1 Momentum or Luck point to crash their airship into the *Malagor*, doing 4 🎲 damage to all aboard the flier, but getting them onboard. If the players do not have the Momentum or Luck to spend, the narrator can have them crash into the *Malagor*, but first add 2 Threat to the Threat pool. The crash brings strong resistance, and the heroes must defeat a force of one Eidolon Agent for each player's character and ally present, plus two Elite Eidolon Guards or guard beasts (narrator's choice). Also, the ship is now on alert, increasing the difficulty by 1 for all future attempts to sneak past or deceive guards.

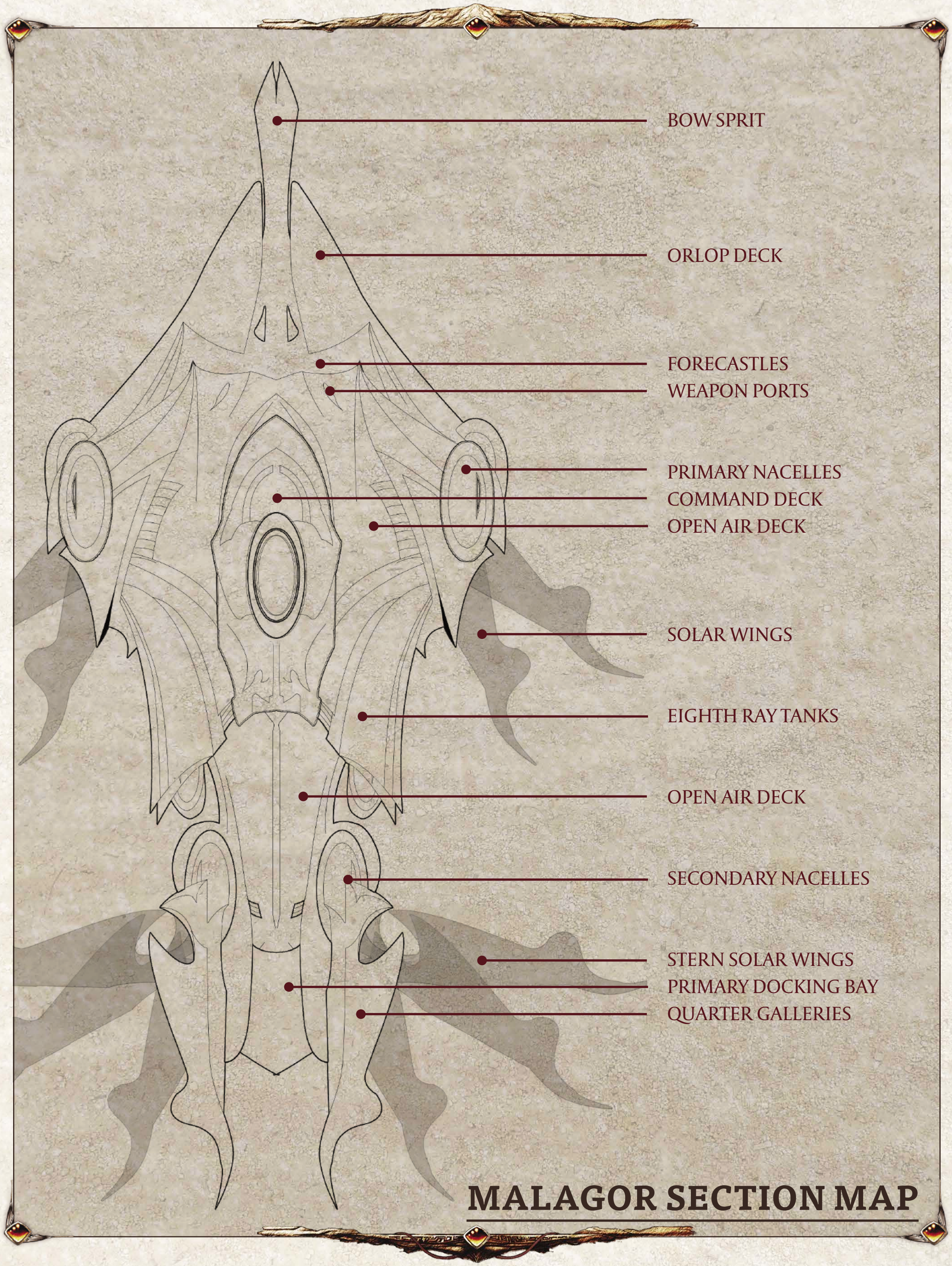
If the heroes have allies to attack the *Malagor*, either with massed ground fire or in aerial combat, they can use the battle to mask their own approach, reducing the difficulty of their test to (D1) and allowing them to board the *Malagor* without damaging their ship.

As All Traitors Do...

In the unlikely event the traitorous twin among Nalan Tir's children (*see Part 1: In the Shadows of Korvas*) has yet to reveal themselves, they will do so now. They will lead the heroes into an ambush, give away their position, or otherwise sabotage any attempt by the heroes to stop the Eidolon and their Dominator Ray. The traitor is no fool, especially if they waited this long to reveal themselves—they will pick the most opportune moment during the early part of this adventure to reveal their true nature and attempt to use their betrayal to help the Eidolon defeat the heroes.

Locating the Command Center

The heroes must figure out the general layout to reach the commander center and disable the Dominator Ray. Fortunately, there are maps of the ship on great engraved plates of brass in various parts of the interior, and one can easily be located near wherever the heroes start their adventure. They are coded by number and section and the design of the ship seems intentionally confusing, but a savvy hero can determine where the ship's command center would be. A **Reason** + **Cunning** (D2) test will decipher this map enough to point the heroes in the right direction and possibly provide valuable Momentum to make navigating the ship's winding corridors safer and easier.


BOW SPRIT
ORLOP DECK
FORECASTLES
WEAPON PORTS
PRIMARY NACELLES
COMMAND DECK
OPEN AIR DECK
SOLAR WINGS
EIGHTH RAY TANKS
OPEN AIR DECK
SECONDARY NACELLES
STERN SOLAR WINGS
PRIMARY DOCKING BAY
QUARTER GALLERIES

MALAGOR SECTION MAP

SCENE 4.2: THE PATH IS LONG AND FULL OF PERILS

Adversaries: Various (see descriptions)
Allies: Possible (see description)

The heroes will face six obstacles in six sections of the *Malagor* while making their way to the command center, which controls the operation of the Dominator Ray. Each section and obstacle are rolled randomly on the table below to represent the ship's design; the *Malagor* is constructed to disorient and confuse outsiders and keep even the crew feeling uneasy.

SECTIONS

The *Malagor* is a massive, labyrinthine airship that, in many ways, resembles a floating fortress more than a vehicle. It has numerous decks and corridors that house everything from loyal but largely harmless crewmen to mind-controlled guard beasts and elite warriors. To reach the central command center where the Dominator Ray is operated, the heroes must make their way through the ship one perilous section at a time.

The narrator should roll a d20 to determine which section the heroes come across as they travel from their start point to the command center. Narrators can spend 1 Threat to place a particular section in their path. Heroes can spend 2 Momentum to find an alternate route, asking the narrator to reroll the result. However, they must take one of the two paths when using this option.

DIE ROLL (D20)	MALAGOR SECTION
1–4	Corridor
5–8	Chamber
9–12	Hazard Zone
13–15	Open Deck
16–19	Security Station / Patrol Point
20	Combination

CORRIDOR

A long, wide hallway with various quarters and small rooms attached. There is nothing really dangerous or exceptional about the area. Sneaking down a corridor is difficult due to the lack of cover; the difficulty of stealth-related tests are increased by 1.

CHAMBER

A large chamber that leads to another section via a door on the opposite wall. Any obstacles are between the heroes and the exit. Chambers are used for personal quarters, prisoner interrogation and holding, and countless other functions. Any player who lost a piece of core equipment can find it here for free, either the original taken by the Eidolon as a souvenir, or a replacement. Characters wishing to locate other useful equipment pay 1 less Momentum to do so in areas where that equipment could logically be found (tools in a maintenance area, guns in an armory).

HAZARD ZONE

Sparking machinery, strange smoke, hissing steam vents, or other hazards make the area dangerous to those traveling through it. All tests to move safely through or fight in the area have their difficulty increased by 1 and narrators receive 2 bonus Threat to create dangers in this area. Any complications rolled here cause an immediate (D3) danger with a danger rating of 3.

OPEN DECK

This section is actually outside the *Malagor* on an open air deck. This may open up heroes to attacks or dangers from outside the ship, such as attacks by the Eidolon ships escorting the *Malagor.* In any event, this location opens the possibility of falling from the decks to the ground far below, an experience that would likely result in death. The rushing winds from the deck make aiming difficult, raising the difficulty of all ranged attacks by 1.

SECURITY STATION / PATROL POINT

Manned by two Eidolon Agents, this station's main danger is the ability for the guards to trigger an alert. If the Eidolon Agents are allowed to perform an action to trigger an alert, the narrator gains 1 free Threat to spend in each future section.

COMBINATION

Roll twice and combine both results. For example, an Open Deck and Chamber might be a large, open-air observation deck, while a Hazard Zone and Corridor could be a smoke-filled maintenance corridor.

OBSTACLES

Have a player roll a d20 to determine which obstacle they face. The heroes may spend 4 Momentum to find a shortcut or clear passage that allows them to avoid an obstacle. They cannot use this ability more than three times total—they must face at least three obstacles before reaching the command center. Narrators can spend 1 Threat to select an obstacle from the list instead of the players rolling. Obstacles can be repeated, though a narrator wishing to repeat the same obstacle needs to pay an additional Threat each time the same obstacle is used.

DIE ROLL (D20)	RESULT
1	Important Prisoner
2–5	Eidolon Patrol
6–8	Again We Meet!
9–13	Guard Beasts
14–16	Crew
17–19	Supply Cache
20	Ambush!

IMPORTANT PRISONER

Two Elite Eidolon Guards, plus one Eidolon Agent for each player hero, are transporting an important prisoner. This can be a hostage the heroes seek to rescue, an ally they didn't even know was captured, or an important stranger who ran afoul of the Eidolon. If the heroes can defeat the Eidolon, they can free the prisoner. For 2 Momentum, a squad of five minion-class subordinates of the prisoner are also held captive, and can render aid once freed.

EIDOLON PATROL

A patrol of Eidolon encounter the heroes. If the heroes are moving stealthily or seek to avoid conflict, they will need to win in an opposed test against the Eidolon Agents' **Cunning + Empathy** to see if they can sense the deception or infiltration attempt. There is one Eidolon Agent for each hero and the patrol is led by a single Elite Eidolon Guard.

AGAIN WE MEET!

One of the surviving henchmen or lieutenants of Pharen Cul encounters the heroes. If they recognize or detect the heroes, they will seek to engage them in battle. The henchman has one Elite Eidolon Guard with them for every hero, though most will accept a challenge of a personal duel. Henchmen with specific followers of their own, such as Jaggs Kurgas and his Thark Renegades, may have their own followers instead of the Elite Eidolon Guard.

It is possible that this obstacle reveals an established or personal enemy of the heroes is in league with the Eidolon. In this case, select a foe from the heroes' adventures or past that is secretly a member of the Eidolon for the heroes to encounter here.

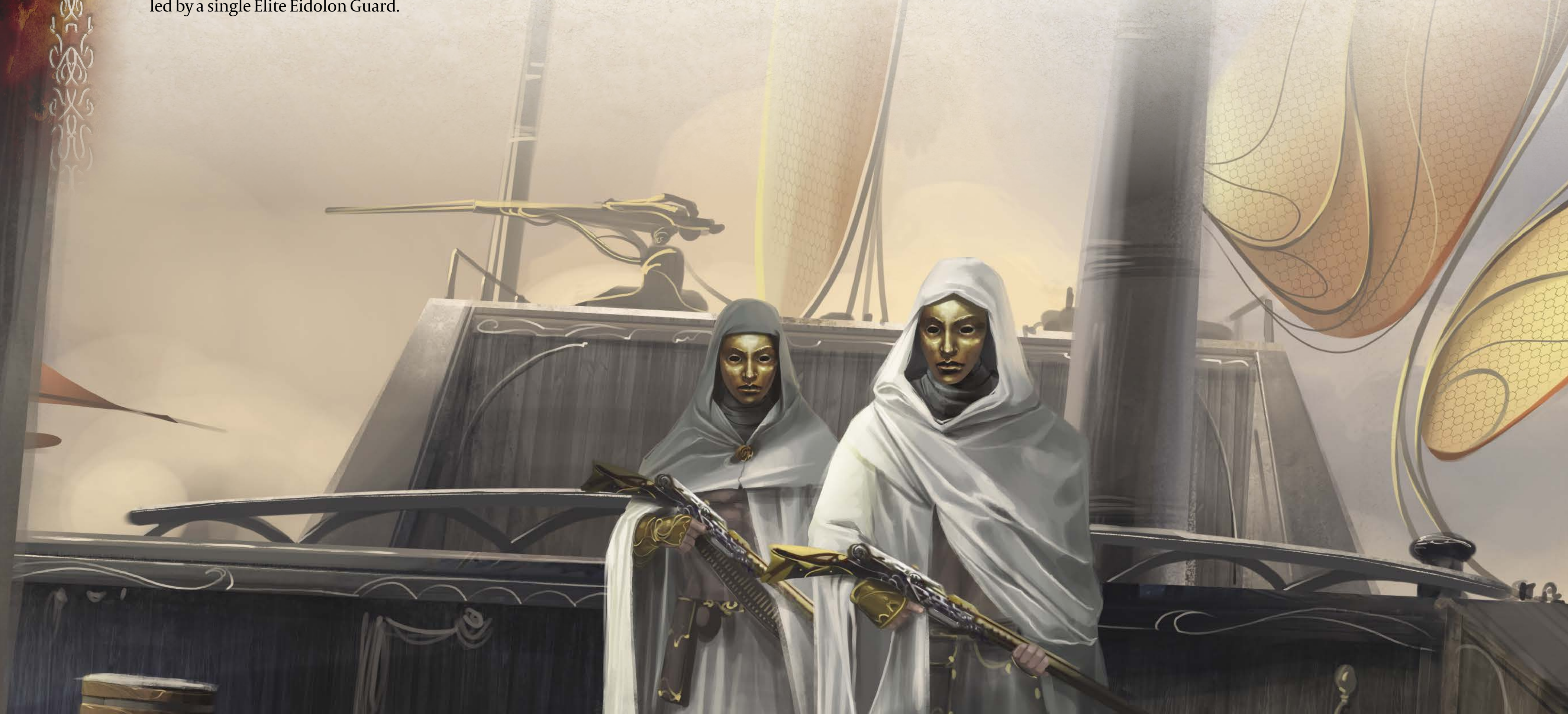
If there are no important lieutenants or henchmen to encounter at this stage of the adventure, the heroes may travel through this sector safely.

GUARD BEASTS

This area is patrolled by a number of Eidolon guard beasts and their handlers. The *Malagor* uses Mind-Controlled Apts as their chief bestial guardians, conditioning the beasts to regard the ship's corridors and rooms as their lair. A guard beast patrol has 1 Mind-Controlled Apt for every 2 heroes and 1 handler for every 2 Apts. Treat handlers as Elite Eidolon Guards.

CREW

Not all the crew of the *Malagor* are ready for a fight with the heroes. Some engineers, maintenance staff, medics, and other types are onboard. If confronted by the heroes, they will seek to flee. If allowed to flee, they will put the ship on alert and all future instances of this result during this adventure are replaced with Eidolon Patrols or guard beasts (narrator's choice).



SUPPLY CACHE

The heroes happen upon an armory or supply cache. The door to this location is sealed, requiring a **Reason + Cunning** or **Might + Passion** (D3) test to bypass. If the cache is opened, the heroes can loot it. Roll a d20 and consult the table below.

For 3 Momentum, the heroes can find a particular cache, allowing them to more easily secure weapons or uniforms as part of their plans. If they wish to discover Explosive or Equilibrimotor Storage, it costs 5 Momentum instead. Heroes can also spend 1 Momentum to find any particular item it would make sense to be stored in the cache, even if it is unusual. For example, while only a handful of Eidolon are Tharks, the hero might spend 1 Momentum to find a Thark rifle and ammunition.

D20	CACHE CONTENTS
1	**Equilibrimotor Storage:** Equilibrimotor, including repair parts and various ropes and lines that allow the user to moor themselves to a larger vehicle.
2–5	**Armory:** Swords, short swords, daggers, hatchets, and pistols.
6–10	**Uniform Storage:** Eidolon masks, cloaks, and harnesses.
11–13	**Larder:** Food, rations, and spices. Not immediately useful but could aid in survival if the heroes end up having to abandon ship in the wilds.
14–16	**Medical Storage:** Medicinal salves, bandages, and other healing items.
17–19	**Engineering Parts:** A mix of small devices, tools, and parts for larger machines. Not immediately useful as is, but a creative engineer or inventor might be able to do something with them.
20	**Explosive Storage:** Shells, bombs, and explosive ordinance. Characters can create makeshift explosives from this content with a **Reason + Daring** (D2) test to create a 3🎲 weapon with the Explosive quality, good for one attack, but hitting everyone in Immediate range.

AMBUSH!

The heroes managed to tip their hand or alert their enemies earlier and now have stumbled into an ambush designed to bring them down. This ambush consists of one Elite Eidolon Guard and one Eidolon Agent for every hero. For 3 Threat, the narrator can add a henchman or lieutenant.

The ambush is run as normal, with a character from each side engaged in an opposed test to see if the ambushers gain advantages (*see **John Carter of Mars** core book, page 58*). For 2 Threat, the narrator may elect to give the ambushers an automatic advantage.

TRAVELING IN DISGUISE

Given many of the Eidolon Agents are masked, the heroes may try to pose as agents to better navigate the *Malagor*. This can be quite effective, but first they need to locate and defeat an Eidolon patrol to steal their uniforms and masks, or raid a supply cache that contains uniforms and masks. Once a patrol is encountered and defeated, the heroes can attempt to pose as loyal members of the Eidolon as they make their way through the ship. To do so, they still must roll for obstacles, but they can attempt to deceive or fool foes instead of fighting or avoiding them. This method also allows the heroes to avoid obstacles by spending 2 Momentum instead of the 4, though they still can only avoid up to three obstacles in this fashion.

THREAT SPENDS

While encountering obstacles, the narrator can spend Threat to add additional adversaries to an encounter. For 1 Threat, they can add an Eidolon Agent, for 3 Threat, they can add a guard beast and its Eidolon Agent handler. For another 3 Threat, they can make an additional roll on the encounter, combining the results (a prisoner escorted by patrol, a henchmen and guard beasts, etc.) Such encounters count as two obstacles, but they are usually quite challenging due to the raw amount of opposition—use this option carefully.

SCENE 4.3: DISABLING THE DOMINATOR

Adversaries: Elite Eidolon Guard, Malagor Crew
Allies: None

The Dominator Ray is controlled from the *Malagor*'s command center using the diadem that Pharen Cul took from the Holy Therns (see *Part 3: Raiders of Kaol*). Without this headpiece, the device's energies cannot be directed and controlled and the device will backfire, damaging the *Malagor* beyond repair. Cul is currently elsewhere, coordinating with his subordinates how to proceed with their plans.

The Dominator is being operated by assorted crew. There are two Malagor Crew for each hero but they will only fight if cornered or threatened. If the traitor is still alive, or Nalan Tir or his loyal child are still held hostage by the Eidolon, they are here, being forced to operate the device. The Dominator Ray, and those present, are guarded by Elite Eidolon Guard, one for each hero, plus one additional Eidolon Guard for each hostage. This additional guard will primarily act to guard their hostage and prevent them from escaping.

Also present are any monster or villain-class named enemies from earlier parts of this adventure who survived, such as Jaggs Kurgas or Scoma. For each named villain or monster, remove an Elite Eidolon Guard from the scene. Inclusion of several important enemies likely makes this battle somewhat more difficult, but it also gives heroes a chance to settle old scores with foes who have so far escaped their grasp.

The heroes' primary goal here is to disable the Dominator Ray, freeing the mind-dominated populace from its effects and preventing its future use. If players or their heroes do not seem motivated enough to disable the device, narrators can use numerous tricks to motivate them. Narrator characters appealing to them for aid, cutaways to the ray robbing people of their free will when it strikes, and other techniques, can remind the heroes of what is at stake.

THE BATTLE BEGINS

The heroes begin by entering the room at the far end of the massive command center. They are Away from the Dominator Ray and Near the guards and crew who stand between them and the device. Any characters operating the Ray are also Away from them and blocked by the same guards and crew.

USING TILES

If using tiles or zones, narrators should set up three zones or tiles to represent the command center. One end is where the heroes enter; another (in the middle) is where the guards and crew stand between them and the Dominator Ray controls. The last, on the end opposite the heroes, contains any hostages being used to operate the device, and any henchmen or villains forcing the hostages to do so. For the purposes of this battle, anything in the same or adjacent tile or zone is Near, while anything on the opposite zone is Away.

If Nalan Tir or his loyal child is present during the battle, the heroes may spend 4 Momentum at any time to have them temporarily break free of their guard, yank the diadem focusing and controlling the device from its mounting on the Dominator Ray's control console, and toss it to them. The hero must succeed in a **Daring + Cunning** (D2) test to catch the thrown diadem; otherwise it is snatched by the nearest villain, who seeks to replace it. If this occurs, the heroes only have until the villain's next action to intercept them.

If no villains are present, the diadem skitters across the deck and can be retrieved after all lesser foes are defeated, or by a hero who moves to its location and scoops it up, dodging enemies as they go.

Disabling the Dominator Ray

It is possible for a hero near the controls, or a friendly narrator character, to smash the controls of the Dominator Ray, disabling it during the battle. This requires a **Might + Passion** (D2) test when in Immediate range of the controls. Any enemy in Immediate or Near range can, if the narrator spends 1 Threat, intercept the attempt, gaining a free attack on the person attempting this.

Success damages the controls slightly, knocking them out of alignment and shutting off the ray temporarily. This can be fixed easily with a **Reason + Cunning** (D1) test and does not cause the device to be permanently disabled. Narrator allies won't attempt to smash the controls unless directed to do so.

For 2 additional Momentum, the device can be severely damaged. A character may spend this Momentum for a friendly narrator character if they desire. This renders the ray unusable without serious repairs and begins to overload it.

If all enemies are defeated, the heroes may automatically smash or disable the Dominator Ray before the next scene. No test is required here, they simply smash it until it stops working.

Studying the Ray

Some scientifically minded heroes might be unwilling to completely destroy the Dominator Ray, instead seeking to shut it down. This can be done only outside of combat, as some time studying the controls and design of the machine is required. With a **Reason + Cunning** (D1) test, the heroes can discover how to shut off the device. However, they also learn that doing so will not free anyone already under the Dominator Ray's effects, though destroying the device will. The device is too large to carry with them and there are still many Eidolon aboard the *Malagor*, far too many for the heroes to battle alone.

However, it's not a total loss. For 2 Momentum, anyone studying the device can learn something of the device's construction and operation. This means that, from now on, this character is considered knowledgeable in techniques of brainwashing and neurological alteration, which may reduce certain difficulties to heal nerve and brain damage, undo a target's brainwashing, and so on. Any scientist who shares or teaches their findings would eventually gain some renown from the work as well.

If Nalan Tir is there with the heroes, he will ask for a moment to study the Dominator Ray. Then, he will sadly say he sees no other way but to destroy the device. Should he survive, Tir's fame as a scientist will increase, and he will spend the next few months helping victims of Eidolon brainwashing recover.

Overload Imminent

If the heroes disable the Dominator Ray, the device begins to overload. They must flee the immediate area within 3 turns or suffer 8 🎲 damage with the Explosive quality (each effect rolled does 1 Injury and 1 Fear damage, or 2 damage for those without those tracks). Any minions caught in this explosion are killed. This explosion also critically damages the *Malagor*, requiring all aboard to abandon ship before it becomes their tomb. If the ray overloads, the ship is doomed.

Any enemies engaged with the heroes at this time will seek to flee, ideally while hindering the heroes' own escape. How exactly they accomplish these two goals depends on the exact situation and character, but when in doubt, the old "take a hostage and try to leave" or "use a surprise attack to ambush a hero and run as they deal with the wound" standbys work just fine. Narrators can spend Threat to help a villain escape, but remember, this is the penultimate conflict and it is not only okay if the villains perish now, it is quite appropriate.

Escape!

If the device begins to overload, the heroes must escape the *Malagor* as quickly as they can to survive. The best method of escape is to take a flier from a nearby hangar. Narrators should allow the heroes to explore other options, but the ship is burning, vital systems are exploding around them, and it is likely too difficult to backtrack or seek another method of exit. Locating the hangar is easy, a number of surviving technicians and crew are fleeing, several saying they must reach the hangar to escape. Assuming the heroes take this route, no one will stop them—at least until the next scene.

Eidolon Triumphant

If the heroes are defeated in this scene, they will wake up in the hangar, bound and surrounded by foes as the next scene begins.

SCENE 4.4: FALL OF THE EIDOLON

Adversaries: Pharen Cul, Elite Eidolon Guard, Eidolon Agents, any remaining villains and henchmen
Allies: Any prisoners not yet rescued

Once the Dominator Ray is disabled or shut down, or the heroes fail to do so and are captured, the leader of the Eidolon will appear to destroy the heroic interlopers who foiled his plan. Pharen Cul will tell them that, while he at times found their defiance amusing, that time has passed. Then, drawing his sword, he will direct his followers to attack.

The setting of this scene depends on how the last one ended. In any event, the opposition is Pharen Cul, any surviving villains and notable henchmen, two Elite Eidolon Guards (Cul's personal escort), and one Eidolon Agent for every hero. Narrators may spend Threat to add additional enemies to this scene: 2 Threat for an additional Elite Eidolon Guard, and 1 for an Eidolon Agent.

IT IS ALL FIRE AND RUIN

If the heroes have disabled the Dominator Ray and the *Malagor* is severely damaged, the scene occurs in the nearby hangar as Pharen Cul and his followers seek to flee the *Malagor*, and the heroes seek to secure a flier for their own escape. Cul shouts defiantly as he and his followers move toward the last undamaged flier, saying that, even though the heroes have won the day, he and his "army of shadows" will rise again.

The only way for the heroes to reach the flier and escape the *Malagor* before it breaks apart is to defeat Pharen Cul and his followers. Fortunately, Cul is too obsessed with punishing the heroes for their actions to flee immediately, meaning he will attack them in a rage. This gives the heroes a chance not only to reach the transport first, but also defeat Cul once and for all.

WILL NO ONE RID ME OF THESE MEDDLERS?

If the Dominator Ray is still working and the heroes have been captured or rendered unconscious, then they revive in time to see Pharen Cul celebrating his triumph and mocking their failure. He will give them some small credit for coming close to stopping the Eidolon, but then will assure them they have finally and utterly failed. With a sadistic smile, he orders his subordinates to prepare to take the *Malagor* to the heroes' home cities or nations. He informs the heroes they die knowing the Eidolon will conquer their homes and enslave their loved ones first, and then use these mind-controlled slaves to destroy any who dare resist.

After gloating at the captured heroes, Cul directs his followers to take the heroes, bound and under guard, to the end of the hangar and throw them from the *Malagor*. This will almost certainly kill even the hardiest heroes, but all is not lost. Now is there chance: they must break their bonds and defeat this villain.

The heroes need to succeed in a (D2) test to either escape or break their bonds. Escaping bonds usually uses **Daring + Cunning** and breaking them, **Might + Passion**, but narrators are encouraged to let players try anything plausible to get them loose and back into the fight. Allow any or all of the heroes to attempt to free themselves. Narrators can also remind players having difficulty freeing their heroes they can succeed at cost, perhaps taking damage, adding to the Threat pool, or suffering a complication as they barely manage to free and arm themselves.

Once freed, the heroes need to free any companions still bound and arm themselves to have any chance of success. Narrators should remind heroes they can spend 2 Momentum to disarm a monster or villain-class foe as part of attack, but should also allow them to seize a minion's weapon for 1 Momentum. This may be part of an attack that takes out one or more minions—a great way to even the odds a bit. Heroes may also automatically free themselves or a companion by spending 3 Momentum in this case—thus a character willing and able to spend the Momentum can break their bonds, disable a guard, seize a weapon, and cut or shoot a companion's bonds, all in one flurry of heroic action!

FACE ME YOU COWARD!

If the heroes need time or assistance in their escape, they might engage Cul and other villains present socially, trying to goad them into a duel or some other foolish action. This action is difficult (raise all normal difficulties by 1 for such actions) but not impossible. **Daring**, **Cunning**, **Empathy**, and **Passion** are the most common attributes used to goad or challenge a foe in this manner, but a clever player or the right talent could help bring in almost any combination of attributes to push Cul or another Eidolon Agent into freeing a character and placing a weapon in their hand for a dramatic, if somewhat foolhardy, final duel. Such an action might give the other heroes additional chances to escape and turn the tide.

IF EVERYTHING GOES WRONG

If, for some reason, the heroes cannot, or do not free themselves, they are led to the edge of the hangar and thrown into the open sky. This signals an ignoble end to the campaign and their lives. Narrators should give the players every opportunity to avoid this fate—such a tragic passive death is out of place in Burroughsian planetary romance. Even an eleventh hour arrival of narrator characters to save the day is more appropriate, though exceptionally unsatisfying for the heroes and their players—this too should be avoided.

THE FINAL CONFLICT

This is the last climactic fight of this campaign arc. The narrator should pull out all the stops. Even if the heroes assaulted the *Malagor* alone, this is when their allies and other important figures who are resisting the Eidolon will show up, assaulting the ship from the outside with numerous armed fliers. However, such battles are all secondary to the conflict occurring in the hangar between the heroes and the Eidolon.

CUL AND HIS FOLLOWERS

Cul is a dangerous combatant and will freely use his Master Manipulator talent to let his subordinates soak up damage for him. This is gives the villain longevity in this fight, but it is ultimately a losing strategy, as eventually he runs out of underlings to throw in the way of the heroes' attacks.

Cul, and most of his followers, will fight generally according the basic tenets of Barsoomian honor, facing blade for blade, pistol for pistol. However, Cul and the Eidolon won't resort to the finer points of Barsoomian dueling here. If the players draw a dagger, they will avoid their pistols but still use their swords, for example. This eccentricity shows the strength of Barsoomian honor and the arrogance of Cul and his ilk, who believes he can destroy any foe and that he is superior to all. This honorable method doesn't hold for those Eidolon established throughout the adventure to have little to no honor. This includes Jaggs Kurgas and likely the traitorous twin, assuming either is still alive and present. Such enemies will gleefully strike at the heroes with any and all means at their disposal, a reminder of their treacherous nature.

Any villain defeated in this battle can be subdued and captured, including Cul himself, but if given a chance, all will take death instead, throwing themselves from the hangar or turning their weapon on themselves. Each member of the Eidolon knows they face imprisonment and eventual death if caught and would prefer to end their lives on their own terms.

DANGERS AND THREAT

If the *Malagor* is damaged from the destruction of the Dominator Ray, the narrator can spend Threat to create dangers during this scene (*see* ***John Carter of Mars*** *core book, Chapter 12: Narrators of Mars*). These could represent explosions in nearby wrecked fliers, dropping part of the hangar's ceiling, and other hazards for heroes to avoid. These hazards also likely endanger the villains and a clever hero might find a way to use this carnage to their advantage.

If the *Malagor* is not damaged, then the narrator can spend Threat to bring in reinforcements for the Eidolon, if necessary. Each minion added costs 1 Threat, while monsters such as Elite Eidolon Guards and Mind-Controlled Banths cost 2 Threat. This should only be done if the heroes are winning the battle too easily. If the heroes are winning a hard fought victory, let them. They're heroes, after all.

USING TILES

The hangar is large and open at one end to the sky. One remaining flier is present; the rest are burning rubble or are already gone. The heroes begin this scene on the tile or zone furthest from the open hangar bay. They are on the same tile as Cul and his followers and there is a tile between them and the flier, which rests on the far end of the hangar. The "tile" past this is open sky.

DISABLING THE DOMINATOR REDUX

If the heroes lost during the previous scene, before the Dominator Ray could be disabled, they will still need to destroy or disable the device, even after Cul is defeated. Fortunately, with Cul defeated and the Eidolon in chaos, it is easy for them to return to the command center, face any guards and enemies they didn't defeat during Disabling the Dominator, plus any possible additions from narrator Threat spends, and finish the job. Once they do this, they can easily grab a flier and leave without additional conflict.

OPTIONAL SCENE:

NOT YET YOU DO NOT!

It's possible Pharen Cul and some of his followers will reach the transport and delay the heroes enough they can make their escape. In this case, the heroes are in serious trouble, but it need not mean their death. An ally might arrive to whisk them away, arriving in a small flier they can use to pursue the Eidolon if they wish. Or perhaps they are saved, but the leaders of the conspiracy escape. It is also possible they could repair a damaged flier, at least enough to limp to safety—though they might crash in the wilderness below if the narrator has more adventures planned before they again reach safety! It is even possible the heroes manage to leap onto the outside of the fleeing craft, requiring them to scale its exterior, reach the decks, and find a way inside to finally do away with their foes.

Pursuing the Eidolon's ship becomes a series of opposed tests and conflict actions between Cul and his followers and the heroes. The exact nature of this depends on what the heroes do: this could be a ship-to-ship chase and battle, or a daring fight aboard the fleeing ship.

EPILOGUE

As the *Malagor* burns and crashes to the ground, the heroes look on, confident they ended a major threat to the free peoples of Barsoom. They are soon contacted by Tardos Mors, Mors Kajak, Kulan Tith, and other great leaders of Barsoom. They are called to a ceremony in Greater Helium, both to honor them, but also to explain to the assembled nobles and dignitaries what they know of the Eidolon and if the threat they pose is truly over. Assuming the *Malagor* was destroyed and Cul defeated, the answer to this is probably yes. Even if the conspiracy could recover, it would take many years for it to return.

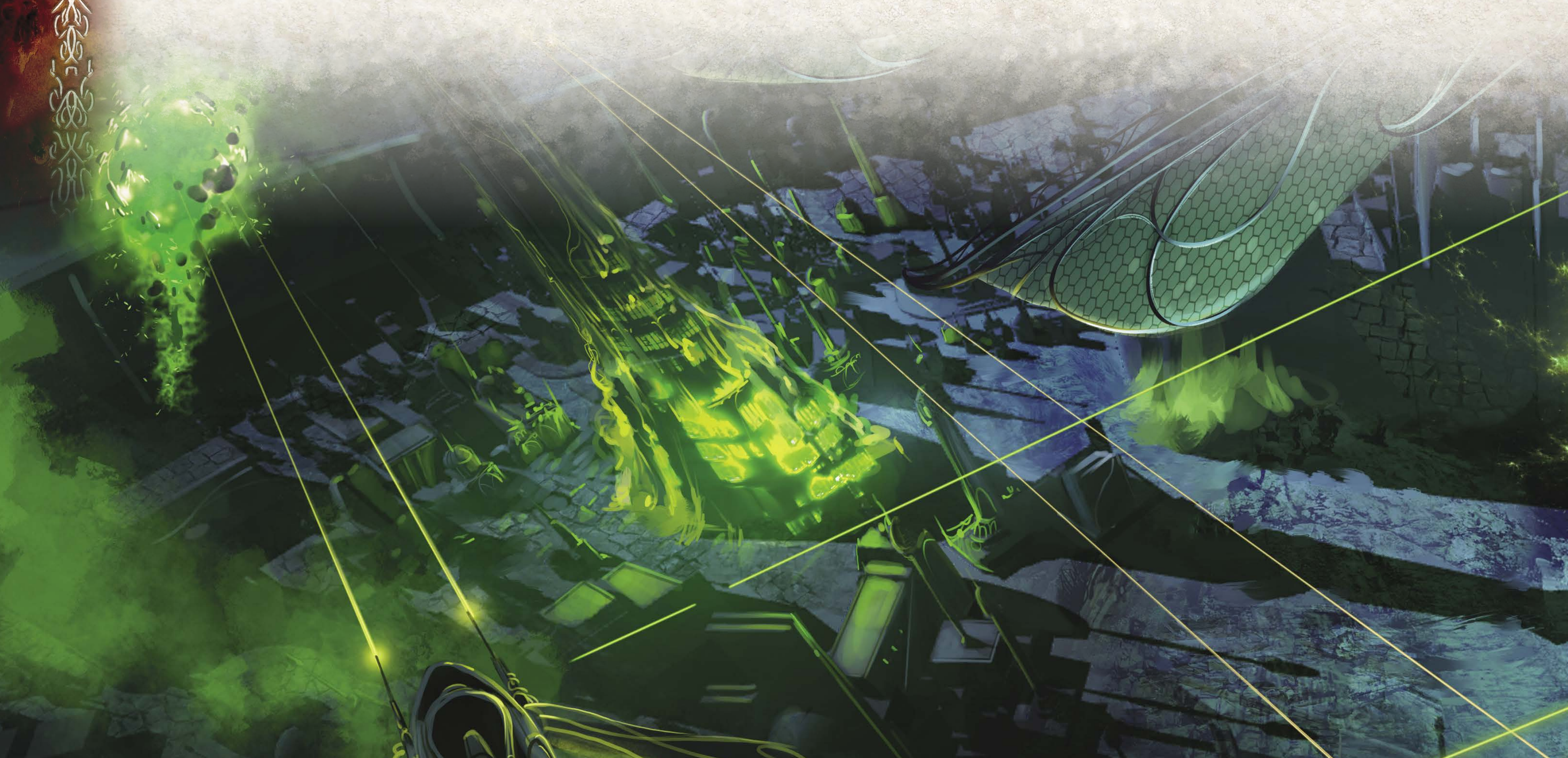
Any characters who were brainwashed, imprisoned, or otherwise menaced by the Eidolon, are freed and receive any care they require. Any surviving traitors and secret Eidolon agents who did not perish during the final battle are either captured or flee, likely to cause trouble at a future date.

The rulers of Barsoom are very grateful to the heroes, and if they wanted a particular favor or sought to prove themselves worthy of some boon, now is the time to ask. The group has proven themselves grand heroes capable of literally saving the world and it is likely that, in addition to whatever renown they gain from their actions, they will be called upon to perform similar deeds in the future.

SURVIVING EIDOLON

If Cul or any other Eidolon were captured during the adventure, they can be turned over to Tardos Mors and the other leaders of Barsoom. If so, Mors wastes no time passing sentence on them. Cul and his conspirators are to be executed for their crimes. The heroes could intercede on behalf of one or more of the prisoners if they desire, though they risk leaving a dire enemy alive to escape and trouble them again.

If the heroes had dealings with the Thern Joran Tai, he will approach them before the prisoners leave the heroes' care to ask Cul be turned



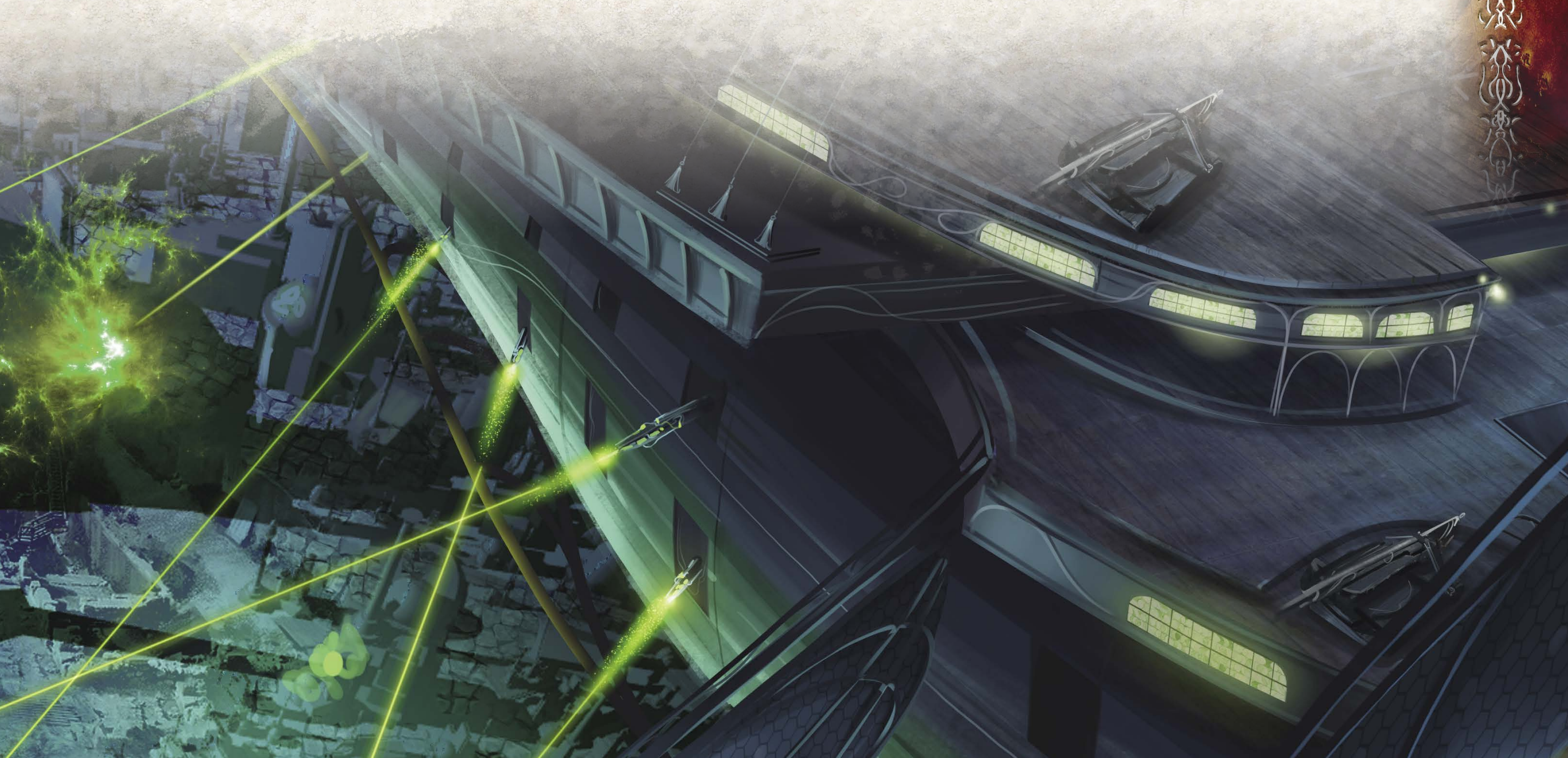
over to them; he does not care about any other Eidolon captives. He will also request that if the diadem is in the heroes' possession they surrender it. He will not press either request if refused, but he will subtly imply he and his fellow Therns will be "most displeased" by the refusal—this may lead to future problems and opportunities! If the heroes give Cul over to the Thern he will never be seen again, though it is possible his methods of brainwashing, and any remaining spies, may now serve Tai and his masters.

REWARD

With Barsoom saved, the heroes will receive ample reward for their effort. Participating in the adventure grants them 5 experience, while disabling the Dominator Ray and disposing of Pharen Cul gains an additional reward of 5 experience apiece.

As soon as the characters can meet with the leaders of Helium and other great nations of Barsoom, they will find themselves hailed as great heroes and showered with renown. All heroes who participated in stopping the Eidolon gain 5 renown. Destroying Cul and truly bringing an end to the Eidolon gains another 3, with additional reward for exceptional heroism being possible. This is also an excellent time for heroes to secure titles and high-placed allies among the nations of Barsoom. After all, they saved the day with their brave and dynamic efforts! Retrieving the control diadem from the Dominator Ray is worth an additional 1 renown, as the artifact is rare and valuable.

Heroes seeking physical reward are likely to receive special items tied to whatever accolades they acquire. A grateful jeddak granting a hero rank in his navy might also give the character an ornate sword. A hero who becomes attached to a powerful jed might find they have access to the noble's personal fleet of fliers. Such rewards make for great flavor, but they are also physical representations of accolades.



2D20 SKIRMISH RULES

CHAPTER 5:
SKIMISH RULES

CHAPTER 6:
MINIATURES STATS

CHAPTER 7:
SKIRMISH SCENARIONS

CHAPTER 8:
FALL OF THE EIDOLON

CHAPTER 5: 2D20 SKIRMISH RULES

Swords of Mars 2d20 Skirmish is the war-game version of Mōdiphiüs' 2d20 roleplaying game system. This system takes inspiration from the well-tested RPG system and gives you a light set of rules for quick, fun skirmish combat. While the system can scale up for larger conflicts, that is beyond the scope of these rules. For now, grab your sword and fight for honor and glory!

Swords of Mars 2d20 Skirmish uses the same basic resolution mechanic seen in the roleplaying game. All tests are made with at least 2d20, needing a number of successes depending on difficulty. The target number for success is determined by a unit's base attributes plus any relevant special abilities. Each unit also has a focus that, if rolled under, count as two successes.

External factors such as special abilities or conditions apply modifiers to attribute tests. Such modifiers are detailed in the *Combat* section of these rules. Suffice to say, we've kept them to a minimum to avoid constantly flipping through the book to find a single table.

Successes come whenever you roll your given target number or lower. John Carter has a Melee Attack of 15, so he scores a success for every d20 that rolls 15 or lower. Further, any d20s that roll beneath a models focus for that attribute count as 2 successes. Carter has a focus of 5. Combined with his high Melee Attack attribute, that can bring Carter many successes, some of which convert into Momentum, just as in the roleplaying game. The game consists of a simple turn system, broken into phases. These are detailed in the *Turns* section on page 84. For now, all you need to know is players alternate moving units, and each unit must complete its entire turn before the next unit activates.

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

All the rules you need to play a game of ***Swords of Mars 2d20 Skirmish*** are contained here and in the ***John Carter of Mars*** core rulebook. Of course, anyone familiar with gaming knows there's always various other items needed for play. These are listed below.

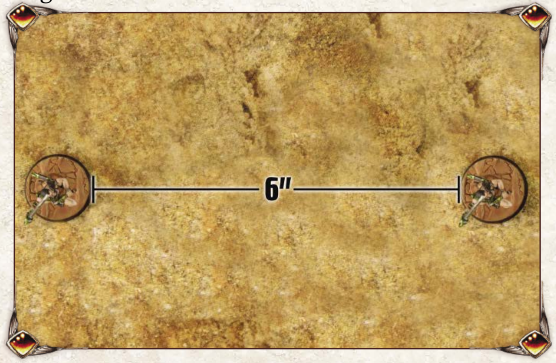
- Five twenty-sided dice
- At least 6 combat dice
- A tape measure, ruler or other measuring tool
- Your set of ***John Carter*** miniatures

Core Concepts

Measuring

Barsoom has its own language, culture, people, and systems of measurement. But we petty Jasoomians (Earthborn) have our own, and we're sticking with them for the miniatures game. Everything is measured in inches. You can use a tape measure, movement stick, or any other device all that players agree on.

Unlike many games, measurement in ***Swords of Mars 2d20 Skirmish*** takes place from the front of the miniatures base to its back. This means models get a little extra movement due to the size of their base. A miniature on a larger base gets that much more movement, reflecting its long stride. Moving from the front of the base to the back also quickens the game, as players don't have to take entire turns to get into combat.



A Note on Models

Miniatures are static by their nature. We assume they can change their facing direction, shoot, and move in any direction at any time. Further, when in combat, if one model in a unit reaches another in the opposing unit, all of the models "pile in." Arrange the individual models within one inch each of each other for coherency. If one side has more members in a squad than another, they may position up to three models in that squad against a single target.

Resolving tests

Swords of Mars 2d20 Skirmish uses the same basic resolution mechanic seen in the roleplaying game. All tests are made with at least 2d20, needing a number of successes depending on difficulty — default difficulty class DC is 1. The target number for success is determined by a unit's base attributes plus any relevant special abilities.

Rolling 2d20 Dice

A standard resolution for any test starts with rolling 2d20. These 2d20 are automatic and you do not have to pay any Momentum for them. While difficulty class slides up and down, you always roll at least 2d20.

Your target number (TN) for a given test depends on the kind of test a model must make. In the ***Swords of Mars 2d20 Skirmish*** game, those tests are almost always made for Melee Attacks, Melee Defense, Ranged Attacks, and Ranged Defense. Any other tests are based off one of the listed attributes. Your target number is the value listed beside the attribute used for the test.

Any roll that scores equal to or under your target number counts as a success. The difficulty class is the number of successes needed to succeed on the test. Any successes beyond the DC count as Momentum. Momentum acts like meta-currency; a player may spend Momentum to add extra d20s, cause more damage, and trigger other in-game effects,

Focus and Sucesses

Each model profile lists a focus. A model has only one focus. Anytime a d20 roll is equal to or below the model's focus, the roll counts as two successes.

Example: *John Carter rolls 2d20s to attack. He has a focus of 5 and his Melee Attack is 16. He rolls an 8 and 5. John scores 1 success for the 8 and two successes for the 5, which meets his focus number. His total is three successes on only two dice.*

Opposed Tests

Opposed tests work just as they normally do in the roleplaying game.

An opposed roll uses both the DC of the test and your opponent's roll to determine the winner. If both sides pass the test, he amount of Momentum generated is used to decide the winner. Most tests are made a DC1 so, any successes scored above 1 generate Momentum. If you have more Momentum than your opponent, you win. Each point of Momentum the looser generates is subtracted from the Momentum generated by the winner. The winner can then spend that Momentum or save it for later. The loser never keeps the Momentum they generate.

Bonus Dice

Most games have dice, and ***Swords of Mars 2d20 Skirmish*** is no exception. What is unusual about dice in this game is that any player can "buy" more dice to help improve their odds.

Just as in the roleplaying game, only two kinds of dice are used in the skirmish game — d20s and combat dice 🎲. Both function as in the RPG with the following exceptions:

- A roll of 20 on any d20 results in the loss of 2 Momentum instead of creating a complication. If the unfortunate player's pool is empty, or at 1, their opponent gains the excess in extra Momentum for themself.
- You may add up to 3d20 to any roll with Create Opportunity for 1 Momentum per die. If you are unsatisfied with your roll, you may reroll all the dice just rolled for 3 Momentum. You cannot exceed the limit of a maximum roll of 5d20.
- Instead of triggering qualities (as in the RPG) 🎲 effects allow a reroll on your damage dice on a one-for-one basis.
- You roll the number of 🎲 for your weapon (as in the RPG) and buy bonus 🎲 with Momentum.

MOMENTUM

Like in ***John Carter of Mars,*** this system relies heavily on Momentum. In fact, you can win or lose on Barsoomian battlefields largely through the flow of Momentum. Unlike the roleplaying game, players have a constant pool of Momentum that refreshes each turn according to the number of troops they have, and the objectives they have captured or lost. On Barsoom, objectives aren't just victory conditions to be met, holding them gives a hefty bonus to the side who took it.

Momentum reflects the vagaries of battle. From morale, to confusion, to unlikely rallies in the face of death, the flow of Momentum recreates the highs and lows of bloody combat on Barsoom. As a new concept for miniature gaming, Momentum is perhaps most easily understood as the commander's ability to manage resources on the field, apply force at opportune times, and turn a stunning moment of victory into a decisive win!

The Momentum system used in ***2d20 Skirmish*** gives more control to the player as opposed to the dice. Tactics become paramount as you attempt to capture objectives (thus gaining more Momentum) while denying your foe the same. Like a real battle, Momentum tends to build on the side winning at any given time, but it also allows for unlikely victories snatched from the jaws of defeat. A smart commander can turn a seemingly hopeless situation to their advantage while a foe riding the wave toward certain victory might squander their advantage, letting ego get the better part of valor.

This being the case, Momentum pools grow quite high in ***2d20 Skirmish***. Momentum determines who goes first in a round, how many dice you roll to attack or defend, extra movement, sequential actions, Counterstrikes, and a host of other conditions found in Barsoomian Warfare.

A commander's ability to know when to spend and save Momentum means the difference between life and death on Mars!

MOMENTUM CAP

Each faction has a Momentum cap equal to their leader's Melee Attack attribute plus the number of grades in the Leadership special ability. No faction or player can save more than this number of Momentum at any time unless otherwise specified by scenario rules or held objectives. You can only store up so much energy before your soldier's tire, loose morale, or become distracted.

Momentum is generated by models still in the game, as well as success in risky (DC1 or greater) actions. You never generate Momentum on a zero difficulty task. Your commander and their troops must earn what they spend.

BASE MOMENTUM

Each turn units generate Momentum, adding to the group Momentum pool for that side. Saved Momentum can never exceed the cap mentioned above. However, Momentum generated by objectives may always exceed the pool's cap. This makes taking objectives enormously important in gameplay.

> ***Example:*** *John Carter has the Leadership special ability grade 3 and his Melee Attack attribute is 15. His side can never store more than 18 Momentum unless the excess comes from claimed objectives. The only limit on objective generated Momentum is how many objectives are on the board and how long you can keep them from your enemy.*

MOMENTUM IN THE REFRESH PHASE

During the Refresh Phase units generate Momentum as follows:

- **Minion squad:** 3 Per turn (Note, they generate this until reduced below 3 models at which point they generate 1 less per lost model).
- **Tough:** 3 Momentum
- **Beast:** Varies, usually 3 Momentum
- **Hero:** 4 or more Momentum

A typical side has at least 10 Momentum in their pool at the beginning of each turn until their forces start to take losses. You'll quickly find the base pool isn't enough to do everything you want, and generating Momentum on opposed rolls and captured objectives is vital to one's strategy.

Once you've accumulated Momentum, you'll likely want to spend it. Below are things you can buy with Momentum and the cost associated with each. Some scenarios may offer other Momentum-generating opportunities. If so, such opportunities are stated in the scenario description.

MOMENTUM SPENDS

Momentum can be spent in the following ways:

IMPROVE THE ODDS

Add up to 3d20 at 1 Momentum per one die. You can never buy more than 3 extra d20s. Unless specifically stated in a unit's profile, you'll never roll more than 5d20 at one time.

CALL REINFORCEMENTS

Only as stated in certain scenarios (rules in each scenario).

PURCHASE BONUS COMBAT DICE

Momentum allows the purchase of bonus combat dice. These cost 1 Momentum per die up to four dice. Beyond four , each die costs 3 Momentum. Such devastating attacks require a massive expenditure of energy. Note that this differs from the ***John Carter of Mars*** roleplaying game.

BONUS	COST
1–4	1 Momentum per Die
5+	3 Momentum per Die

COUNTERSTRIKE

Like the same spend in the roleplaying game, Counterstrike allows a defender to cause damage eafter they defend in an opposed test. All combat uses opposed tests. (*See page 76.*)

ACTIVATE 2 UNITS IN A ROW

For the cost of 5 Momentum you may activate a second unit after the first. You may only do this once per turn.

THIRD ACTION

Gain a third action of any kind for 1 unit at a cost of 3 Momentum. This must be spent immediately after the units last action. You cannot decide to spend it later.

PROFILES

Games using miniatures do not have the granular detail of a roleplaying game, and neither should a model's statistics attempt to replicate the detail of a player character. Here, you're commanding more than one Hero, Tough allies, and squads of Minions. The various attributes of the ***John Carter of Mars*** system have therefore been abstracted for simplicity and to reflect the needs of miniature skirmish gaming. If players want to stick to one player character each, but wish to have a larger battle, there's no reason the current roleplaying game rules can't function using the squad rules found there. This set of rules plays as a fast, bloody, and thrilling skirmish that relies on miniatures and consistent rules in place of a narrator.

Your models have the following stats:

NAME

This is either the name of the kind of combatant on the field, such as a Zodangan Fighting Crew or, in the case of all Heroes and some Tough foes, the model's personal name such as John Carter, Tars Tarkas, or Dejah Thoris.

TYPE

In the ***Swords of Mars 2d20 Skirmish***, there are four kinds of basic models — Minions, Toughs, Beasts, and Heroes. Minions are the weakest and function best in squads (normally of no more than five) while other types function on their own. In general, a single Hero or Tough is a decent match for a squad of trained soldiers or pirates. Given the constraint of the number of models in the starter set, we haven't imposed hordes upon you. What you get in the box is all you need to play this game.

- **Minions:** Can form squads, can only suffer 1 Wound.
- **Toughs:** Cannot form squads, can suffer 2 or more Wounds.
- **Beasts:** Any non-sentient creature such as an Apt, Banth, or White Ape. Beasts cannot claim objectives.
- **Heroes:** Named characters, can suffer 3 or more Wounds.

ATTRIBUTES

As the focus of a skirmish game is combat, models don't require the attributes needed in a roleplaying game. Instead, sthey are abstracted into 4 combat-leaning attributes. The value of each attribute is the target number for any test using that attribute. The four attributes are:

- **Melee Attack**
- **Melee Defense**
- **Ranged Attack**
- **Ranged Defense**

MELEE ATTACK

Despite the unique, and advanced, technology found on Barsoom swords still play a pivotal role. Indeed, the honor of those fighting on the Red Planet favor the blade over the gun. All such close combat attacks are called a Melee Attack.

A Melee Attack is any attack with a weapon defined in the roleplaying game as a blade. Wielding a blade adds 2🎲 to any attack. Therefore, most Melee Attacks do 3🎲 damage before spending Momentum. An unarmed Melee Attack is any in which the attacker has no weapon. Any unarmed attack inflicts 1🎲 damage. All Melee Attacks are DC1.

MELEE DEFENSE

While sharp blades cut through the Barsoomian air to cleave their foes, all the target can sometimes do is deflect or otherwise dodge the blow. This is known as Melee Defense.

Melee Defense accounts for parrying ability, agility, and the like in hand-to-hand combat. As in melee combat, the difficulty class is DC1. Note, a successful defense generates Momentum but does not inflict damage unless a Counterstrike is paid for. Melee Defense tests occur any time a unit attacks another unit.

RANGED ATTACK

Any attack using a pistol, rifle or other ranged weapon uses the Ranged Attack attribute as its target number. However, as noted above, Barsoom's code of honor means no warrior worth their salt will fire upon an opponent who cannot fire back equally. *We include an optional roll later to reflect this Barsoomian honor system, see page 86.*

RANGED DEFENSE

Ranged Defense represents a unit's general resilience under fire. This is the base target number needed to succeed on a defense test. Defense tests automatically occur any time a unit is attacked.

Focus (F)

While most models on the board in any game are experienced combatants, sometimes even the best soldier exceed their own expectations. This thrilling victory is expressed with a focus number.

Focus represents the model's intense training in combat and other war-related activities. Any time a d20 rolls equal to or under the model's focus number, the roll counts as 2 successes instead of one.

Damage Threshold (D)

Instead of multiple stress tracks found in the roleplaying game, the ***Swords of Mars 2d20 Skirmish*** game uses damage threshold. Each model has a damage threshold (DT) stat that, when met or exceeded in a single attack, causes a Wound.

Damage threshold is the number of hits a unit can receive before they take a Wound. For example, if you roll 4 damage on a unit of five Minions, two of them are dispatched because each Minion has a DT of 2, this means every 2 points of damage cause one Wound. Since a Minion can only receive 1 Wound, a Minion dies for every 2 damage inflicted. Heroes take a Wound for every 4 damage inflicted. He is far tougher and can suffer multiple Wounds.

Example: *A squad of five Red Martian Riflemen find themselves in combat with John Carter. Carter has succeeded in his attack and rolls the combat dice. John's player rolls 5, scoring a total of 4 damage with one effect. In the skirmish game, the effect allows a reroll of one of the dice, so John's player elects to reroll the die that scored no hits. The new result scores 2 points of damage, making his total 6 points of damage. Since a Red Martian Rifleman has a DT of 2, every 2 damage inflicts 1 Wound. As these soldiers can only receive 1 Wound, the excess damage is applied to another model in the squad. John Carter kills 3 Red Martian Soldiers in this round of combat. The Red Martian Rifleman squad can now only attack with 2d20 unless they spend Momentum. Note that any damage leftover if a squad is dispatched is not stored. It is assumed they were minor flesh wounds, or near misses.*

Wounds (W)

Wounds represent the amount of damage a unit can take. When it reaches its maximum number of wounds, the model is dispatched and removed from play. Minions can only ever suffer 1 Wound, while other unit types oscan suffer more. Healing is only possible through the expenditure of Luck points, and then only for Heroes and Toughs. *See page 83 for more information on Luck.*

Special Abilities

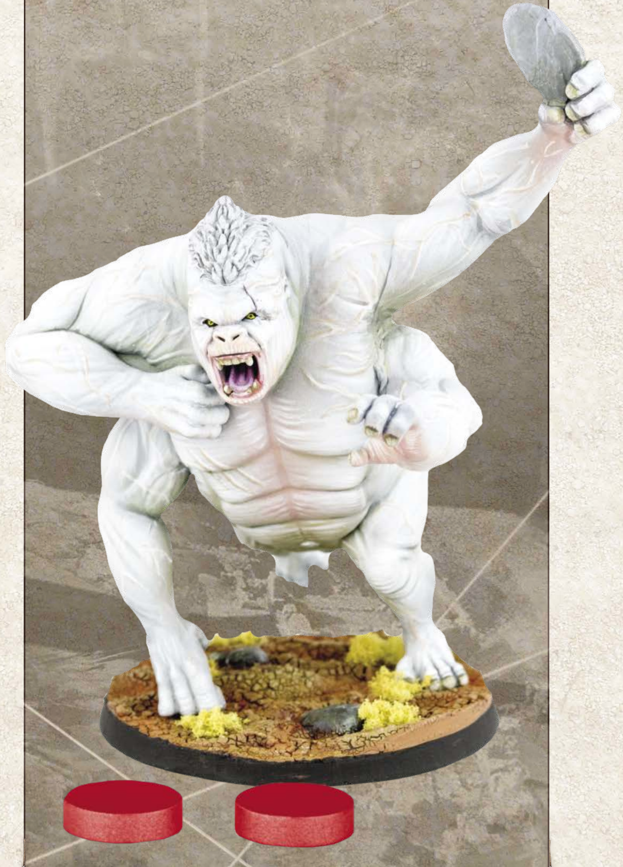
Barsoom is home to many species, all of which have individual talents and abilities. These are distinguishing abilities representing skill, training, or superior ability. They help customize a unit and make it unique. John Carter's Earthborn talent for jumping (Leaps and Bounds) counts as a special ability. Special abilities are always active and do not cost Momentum to use. *See the list of special abilities, and what each do, starting on page 82.*

Luck (L)

Only characters — Heroes and Toughs — can have Luck. Luck represents that ineffable edge characters have over fate, untimely demise, and the like. Each eligible model has their own Luck that never goes into a collective pool. If a model with Luck is removed from play, the Luck they had is removed with it. *See page 83 for more information.*

Tracking During Play

Damage, Momentum, and Luck are the only things you need to track in this game. This leaves a clean board and removes constant referral to the rulebook. Track damage and Luck with glass stones or small chits. Your Momentum tokens display how much you have left. We recommend putting spent Momentum into a cup or bowl over the course of a turn to keep it separate from unspent Momentum.



GAMEPLAY

UNITS

A unit may consist of a single model or, more commonly, five models known as a squad. Regardless of the numbers, a unit operates as a single entity. Whenever we use the term “unit,” it refers to one or more models acting as a single model for activation purposes. Thus, John Carter by himself is a unit, as is a squad of Tharks.

SQUADS

Units of Minions usually form into squads of up to five models total. These operate as a single unit for purposes of activation, movement, and combat. They roll 3d20 for all attacks and defense. When the number of models drops to less than 3 in the squad, they lose 1d20 for each model lost. So, at three models they still get 3d20, but at 2 models they only get 2d20 and so on. A player decide to spend Momentum on bonus dice at this point to help offset this. Better to die in glory than live in shame!

Squads generate 3 Momentum per turn. When dropped below 3 models, they lose that many points of conferred Momentum for their side and the number of Momentum generated each turn is decreased in the same way. A squad of only two soldiers generates only 2 Momentum during the Refresh Phase.

Because squads act like a single model, a squad unit must remain within two inches of a nominated leader model. Normally, this model is the named character in your ***John Carter*** miniatures. That makes it easy to distinguish. For example, Tal Hajus would serve as the leader of your Tharks, even if you do not use his stats. Assume the leader is the last model removed from a squad when taking casualties.

HERO MINIATURES

Your army might consist entirely of Hero or Tough models. In fact, it’s in keeping with Burroughs to focus on the select few. Hero models serve a variety of roles. They can be heroes, as is most common. They might represent a specialist or a non-player model that one or both sides must capture. Usually, such individual, non-squad based models have names and abilities over regular troops.

Beasts also usually appear solo on the board. They tend to be powerful and often unaligned. In some scenarios, the Beast has a master, who might also represent a named person. Squads are your extras while individual named models are your main cast.

SQUADS AND MOVEMENT

Squads move using the leader as the moving model. Move the leader first; The rest of the squad is then arranged around the leader.

Squad models should remain within two inches of the leader. In combat, it is acceptable to arrange the models however you like, so long as both players can tell which squad attacks which target.

Special Abilities

Some models have capabilities above and beyond the normal scope of the rules —White Apes are savage beyond human or Martian ken, humans possess unnatural strength, and red Martians display unparalleled military discipline. Barsoom is full of unique warriors, and their abilities reflect this. Such abilities either introduce a new rule to the game (such as an Earthborn's Leaps and Bounds) or confer some other benefit — usually in the form of a bonus to attributes in certain circumstances.Some of the special abilities are drawn and adapted from the roleplaying game, while others are new. These abilities help make units unique and allow for customization. These are the stuff of well-trained soldiers and legendary deeds.

ACE PILOT

Many races on Barsoom can pilot an airship, but only a few can do so reliably in combat. When radium bullets explode like miniature suns around you and you've set your dials to ramming speed, you can bet it's an ace driving the ship.

For every rank a model has in this ability, they gain 1 bonus d20 for maneuvers (*see page 92*). This cannot exceed the normal cap of 5d20.

DISCIPLINE

Trained soldiers have an advantage over militia and mobs. Through drills and combat experience, some squads emerge more resilient than others.

This ability is for squads only. A squad with this ability doesn't have to pay a morale cost (*see page 92*) in Momentum to activate until it is down to the last two models.

DUELIST

Swordplay is an art on Barsoom and some are masters. A model with this ability is simply superior to most trained troops when wielding a blade of any sort.

This ability confers a +1 bonus to the model's base Melee Attack for each rank up to three.

FOUR-ARMED FOR WAR

Known not only for their ferocity, green Martians also have four arms — that can mean four weapons trying to kill some poor soul at one time!

Only green Martians can take this ability. When a model with this ability generates Momentum while attacking with a weapon they gain 1 extra Momentum. This does not apply if you are unarmed.

LEAPS AND BOUNDS

Men and women from Earth are unusually strong on Barsoom. Not only can they lift great weights, they can jump great distances.

This special ability is for Earthborn only. For the cost of 3 Momentum the model moves up to 14 inches in any valid direction. If they leap into combat, they count as having charged.

PARRY

Not being hit is often as important as hitting your enemy.

This model is trained to parry blows in melee combat. They get +1 to their Melee Defense.

RIFLEMAN

While blades are the most common weapons on Barsoom, the radium rifle features heavily in many conflicts.

The model gains a +1 bonus to Ranged Attack when using a rifle.

SHOOTIST

The radium pistol is a feat of engineering Earth has yet to master. Still, Barsoomians prefer the honor of killing your foe face-to-face, and thus the technology hasn't progressed.

The model gains a 1 bonus d20 to Ranged Attack when using a pistol.

LEADERSHIP

Every group, no matter how small, has a leader. It is the nature of sentient species to form hierarchies. The best leaders inspire; the worst rule through fear.

The model adds its Leadership rank to its Melee Attack attribute to determine its faction's Momentum cap. Additionally, this model can use the Assist ability either themselves or by commanding others. (*See Assist on page 90 of the advanced rules*). In the basic game, the Momentum cap is all you need to know.

INTIMIDATING

Some beasts frighten even the natives. Barsoom is host to predators so deadly that Earth hasn't seen their like since the extinction of the mega fauna.

Any model with a lower Melee Attack than this model finds its intimidating size and ferocity distracting. They roll one less d20 in melee whilst fighting this creature. Ranged attacks are not affected.

LUCK

Heroes and Toughs have Luck points. Such points offer opportunities for superhuman effort and daring feats mere mortals could not hope to accomplish. You can spend Luck anytime you wish whether it is on your turn or your opponent's. Luck is much the same as in the roleplaying game.

Uses for Luck:

- Buy successes. Each point of Luck spent provides 1 success. Successes bought this way are treated as a roll of a natural 1 and thus count as two successes.
- Recover 1 Wound (once per game per unit). Only Heroes can use this rule. You cannot resurrect a dead squad member.
- Gain a third action of any sort (normal cost is otherwise 5 Momentum). Useable once per turn.

Luck points form a pool and can never be spent on models other than the one producing said Luck. We recommend using tokens to remember which models have Luck and how much is left.

TURN SEQUENCE

Turns are the macro-scale at which time is measured in game. A turn consists of the activation of all models that can and wish to activate during a given turn. Play continues, one unit activating at a time, until the last unit remaining activates and the turn is over.

In a game of ***Swords of Mars 2d20 Skirmish***, a turn consists of the activation of all units currently in play. When the final unit completes their activation, a new turn begins.

Turns break down to the following three phases. Most of the "action" takes place in the Activation phase.

- **Initiative phase**
- **Refresh phase**
- **Activation phase**

INITIATIVE PHASE

First turn initiative is an opposed test. Thereafter, the side with the most Momentum, prior to refreshing, goes first. If you need to go first in the next turn to complete a plan, you better save more Momentum than your opponent. All Momentum is included, so temporary gains and generated Momentum for holding objectives count. This adds more tactical value to gaining objectives.

First turn initiative is an opposed Melee Attack test with the Leadership special ability adding to the target number. Any player may buy up to three additional d20 for this test. Purchasing rerolls are not allowed. Once initiative is determined, the winner activates one unit, and only one unit, first.

In the case of a tie, the side with the higher Leadership ability goes first. If those too are equal, roll again.

After the first round, initiative goes to the side with the most Momentum left prior to the Refresh phase. If you need initiative to advance your tactics in the next turn, you better not spend all your Momentum in the previous turn. This skirmish game relies on the application of limited resources on the battlefield. As commander, you must allocate those resources better than your opponent.

REFRESH PHASE

In the Refresh phase, each side calculates their Momentum pool for the coming turn. This calculation adds Momentum generated by units each turn, leftover Momentum from the previous turn, and any Momentum awarded by held objectives. Except for Momentum generated by held objectives, the Momentum pool cannot exceed the Momentum cap.

To calculate your Momentum pool, follow these steps:

1. Count leftover Momentum for initiative
2. Calculate Momentum generated per unit
3. See that this total does not exceed your Momentum cap
4. Add Momentum for objectives which allow exceeding the Momentum cap
5. The total is your Momentum pool for the next turn.

Example: *John Carter's side calculates their Momentum pool for the coming turn. They hold one objective worth 5 Momentum points. They have 4 Momentum left from the previous round and the following troops:*

- *John Cater (Hero) = 4 points*
- *Tarks Tarkas (Tough) = 3 Points*
- *Dejah Thoris (Tough) = 3 points*
- *Squad of Red Martian Riflemen (Minion) 2 Martians left = 2 points*

The total Momentum generated by the troops is 12, plus 4 Momentum left over from the previous turn for a total of 16. His Leadership special ability means his Momentum cap is 15 (equal to his Melee Attack number). The extra point of Momentum above his faction's cap is lost. However, he holds a 5-point Momentum objective. Objectives do not count toward your cap. Therefore, John Carter's side has 20 Momentum for the next turn. That seems like a lot, but it goes fast on the bloody fields of Mars!

Models without the Leadership special ability use their Melee Attack as a base for the Momentum cap. Since these models lack the Leadership special ability they must subtract three from their Momentum cap. Losing your leader without a backup puts your side in a tough position.

ACTIVATION PHASE

This is where all the action happens, in the Activation phase. Your models hurl themselves into fray here, fight off menacing charges from their foes, and desperately try to claim an objective before their enemy.

ACTIVATING TWO UNITS IN A ROW

A player may activate two units in a row on their phase if they spend 5 Momentum for the second unit. They may only activate one additional unit. You may only activate twice in a row per turn, not per activation.

There are six simple actions a unit may take during their turn. Each unit may do two of these actions during each activation. Movement always comes first, and you may not pick the same action twice for free, with the exception of Movement. You must pay 3 Momentum for a third action to take the same action twice.

1. Movement
2. Charge
3. Attack (*see Combat, page 86*)
4. Use a special ability (*see page 82*)
5. Claim Objective
6. Call for Reinforcements (Scenario specific, rules detained in relevant scenarios)

MOVEMENT

Movement allows units to get into place around the battlefield and head toward objectives. Unlike attacks, Movement can be performed twice in the same turn without spending Momentum. The standard movement rate of every unit is 6 inches unless otherwise altered by terrain or a special ability. There is no facing in the game, and the unit may turn as it needs to so as to avoid obstacles and the like. If you come within one inch of an enemy while moving, those units are automatically engaged in melee.

Movement always occurs before any other action. If you move twice, and do not pay for a third action, you may not take any further actions.

If moving a squad, movement is always measured from the leader.

ROUGH TERRAIN

Rough terrain does not slow movement. It does, however, cause your enemy to strike you first if your unit charged through difficult terrain. This accounts for the slight loss of speed such terrain inflicts. Charging uphill, for example, is much deadlier a proposition than charging downhill.

- Rocky ground
- Shallow Water (not swimming)
- Sand
- Mud
- An Unstable Airship deck
- Woods
- Steep hills
- Anything cited in the scenarios or those of your invention

For a flat cost of 3 Momentum, any unit can pass through difficult terrain as if it were normal. Motivated troops often charge up hills, race across sandblasted ruins, and slog through the mud after a welcome rainfall. Players must agree before deployment on what represents rough terrain on the table. Generally, any flat, normal ground imposes no penalty. However, flat ground turned to mud makes it harder to charge as does a steep incline of greater than 45 degrees.

CLIMBING AND JUMPING

All models may climb and jump a number of inches equal to half a standard move (3 inches). If they take a move before jumping, they can double the distance jumped. As Earthborn have the Leaps and Bounds special ability they rarely need to climb anything at all.

CHARGE

A charge is any move action, in straight line only, that brings a unit into contact with the enemy. If the unit reaches its enemy with this move, it is allowed a free, immediate attack. Note that this is an exception to the third action rule. A charge allows you to make three actions in one activation for no Momentum cost, but the three actions can only be Movement, Movement, and Attack.

The unit charging must be at least 6 inches away from their target to build up enough speed to crash through the enemy's defenses. The charge must be in a straight line. You may enter melee simply by coming within one inch of an enemy unit without the need to charge. Any unit you charge at must be in line of sight (*see page 86*).

A charge also confers a free reroll of 1d20 before or after paying for a total reroll as noted previously.

Example: *John Carter declares a charge using two Movement Actions. Charging gets him one attack with a free 1d20 reroll. He attacks a unit of Zodangan Fighting Crew who are 9 inches away, hence having to spend two Movement actions. Were he closer to the Zodangan Fighting Crews, he'd have to be at least 6 inches away to get the charge bonus. If not, the unit is simply entering melee.*

John Carter gets only scores two successes. Displeased with the roll, John Carter's player pays 5 Momentum to reroll all the dice. This time he scores four successes. However, he still gets his free 1d20 reroll. He chooses to take it and winds up with five successes on his roll. Now, the Zodangans roll their Melee Defense dice to see who wins the combat.

COMBAT

When bodies lie still under the Barsoom sun and the flags of the victors snap in the wind, it is by combat that these goals were achieved. While scenarios outline narrative goals, and tell a story, it's combat that usually determines the outcome of that tale. As in most miniatures games, combat is the central factor in deciding the winners from the losers, the living from the dead.

In the ***Swords of Mars 2d20 Skirmish*** game, combat is broken down into two types: Ranged and Melee.

RANGED COMBAT

Face-to-face combat is the more honorable form of killing one's opponent, but firearms nevertheless have their place on the fields of war. To make a ranged attack on an opposing unit, that unit must be within line of sight (LoS). To check line of sight, check that the attacking unit can draw an unobstructed straight line from one of their number (if the unit comprises more than one model) to their target's base. If the base is not wholly obstructed, the attacker has line of sight. For units of multiple models, the attacking unit must draw line of sight to 2 of the enemy's bases to achieve LoS. Thus, 3 Tharks in a squad of 5 might be out of LoS but as long as two models meet the above criteria, the whole unit may be fired upon.

There are only two ranges used in the game — Short and Long. Weapons may fire at one or both of these ranges depending on type. A pistol has a range of Short, while a Rifle can fire at Short and Long range.

Short range is 6 inches while Long range is 15 inches.

Ranged combat, like melee, is always an opposed roll, but the defender may never Counterstrike. The opposed roll consists of the attacking unit's Ranged Attack versus the target's Ranged Defense. Each side rolls against a DC 1 test.

Both sides must first get 1 success to successfully attack or defend. If the attacking unit fails this roll, they fail to attack. If the defending unit fails this roll they automatically loose the opposed test. Should both parties succeed, the side with the most Momentum generated wins the opposed roll. As in the roleplay game, the winners Momentum is decreased by 1 for each Momentum generated by the other unit (assuming both succeed on the d20 roll), *see **John Carter of Mars** core book, Chapter 4: Adventuring in Barsoom, page 49.*

If the defender in the opposed roll wins, no damage is dealt.

AIMED SHOT

Shots are often taken out of reflex, or merely in the direction of incoming fire. Well-disciplined troops may take an Aimed Shot. To do so, the unit spends 1 action aiming. They cannot move in this turn, even if you spend the 3 Momentum normally allowed.

The Aimed Shot gives the attacker up to two re-rolls on their d20. These are re-rolls, not extra dice. The maximum d20 rolled at any one time is still five. The re-roll always stands. The first roll no longer counts. Such re-rolls are a good way of saving Momentum when a 20 comes up on the die.

COVER

Cover comes in two forms — hard and soft. Hard cover will stop a radium bullet. Soft cover makes it harder to see the target. Either can save a model's life. If a model, or squad is approximately 50% behind any sort of cover, then the DC for the shooter becomes 2. For hard cover, the DC is 3.

This doesn't cover the nuances of varying forms of cover or under what circumstances a miniature may claim it. This isn't a game primarily about ranged combat and, even in the advanced rules, the planetary romance action of Burroughs doesn't bother much about taking cover when the radium begins to fly. We follow in that same tradition, but offer this alternative for those among you who are accustomed to seeking cover in a skirmish game.

OPTIONAL RULE:
TARGETS WITHOUT FIREARMS

According to Martian Honor, it is dishonorable to fire upon a foe who cannot do the same in return. You can choose to break Martian Honor by firing on someone without a firearm, however it comes with the cost of 2 Momentum per attack. Barsoomian warriors of any name do not shoot down men charging them in melee, nor snipe at enemies from afar who wield only blades.

MELEE COMBAT

The men and women who fight on Mars mostly do so with various blades. While the rules make no distinction between different kinds of blades, the Melee Attack and Melee Defense of those that wield them make all the difference. Any units within 1 inch of each other are assumed to be in melee combat unless specified otherwise. Players should “pile in” the miniatures for attack, assuming the two units’ swirling fray allows all combatants to attack regardless of their static position on the table.

Piling in simply means pairing the miniature in such a way that it is clear which units are in contact with which. For two squads attacking each other, you can simply line them around the leader. If a Hero or Tough is also in the fray, position them so their base touches the base of the leader of the opposing squad.

Melee takes place whenever a unit comes within 1 inch of another unit. It never involves ranged weapons. Piling in is a matter of simply placing the miniatures themselves in contact as if all are in the fray. Even if all models cannot get into contact, it is assumed they are still in the fray.

Only the attacker can score damage, and so the opposed roll is to see whether the defender has parried, absorbed, or outmaneuvered the attacker in melee. However, if a Counterstrike is paid for, the defending unit inflicts damage if they win the opposed test. This can be very useful if the unit has sustained Wounds or has low numbers. As noted above, Counterattack only applies in Melee, never in Ranged combat. Barsoomian guns are not designed for rapid fire or rapid response.

Example: *John Carter just won a Melee Attack opposed test against an enemy. Both succeed in meeting the (D1) difficulty but John wins by generating more Momentum. John generates 3 Momentum in total while his enemy generates 1 Momentum. The player controlling John Carter decides to force the enemy model back 2 inches. After measuring, both players see that a 2-inch push sends the unfortunate foe over the edge of the flier on which they dueled.*

PUSHBACKS

Pushbacks are important for two reasons—you can force units off a static objective without having to slay them all, and you can push enemies back off rooftops and even airships.

Sword fighting is more about striking the enemy dead or drawing blood. Pushing your opponent back is a common technique. The winner of any Melee Attack opposed test can move the losing unit back a number of inches equal to the difference in their generated Momentum.

If an adversary falls off a building, roll 2 ⬢ for each story fallen to determine damage. The same goes for clifftops, mesas, bridges, and the like.

If falling from an airship, assume any model that falls is killed outright. You can make exceptions for Heroes if both players agree. In any case, the model does not participate in this scenario from then on.

COUNTERSTRIKE

After defending in an opposed test test, a unit can spend 3 Momentum to Counterstrike, just as in the roleplaying game. This allows the unit to immediately take an Attack action (before any casualties or damage is inflicted from the original attack) against the unit that just attacked them. If they succeed in the Counterstrike attack, the unit can inflict damage. If they fail the opposed test to Counterstrike, it inflicts no damage and the turn continues as normal. Defenders still receive damage from the original attack, even if they dispatched the attackers when they Counterstriked. Both the attack and the Counterstrike are imagined to have happened at the same time.

The normal rules for attacks and opposed tests apply to Counterstrikes.

Momentum generated during a Counterstrike must immediately be spent on ⬢ for damage or lost. You cannot store Counterstrike Momentum. You cannot Counterstrike against a Counterstrike. (*Also see **John Carter of Mars** core book page 54.*)

DIFFICULTY CLASS

All attacks occur at a difficulty class of 1, unless cover is involved or otherwise specified..

MODIFIERS

Modifiers in ***John Carter of Mars*** are generally rare. When they do appear, they are in the form of plusses or minuses to one’s attribute for a given roll. Mostly, these are bonuses are given by special abilities such as Duelist or Rifleman.

Other modifiers are scenario specific.

In general, differences in advantages or drawbacks are expressed by bonus d20, Momentum caps, or modifiers to attributes based on special abilities.

DAMAGE AND WOUNDS

Each model has a DT (damage threshold) stat which, when met or exceeded in a single attack, causes a Wound. This is an abstraction of the varying stress tracks in the roleplaying game, a model's resilience in combat, and proficiency with their weapon for parrying and the like.

Every number of hits scored on 🎲 damage equal or above the Damage Threshold of the target inflicts one Wound.

Every effect rolled does 1 damage and allows the attacker to reroll any 1 🎲 if the player desires. Such rerolls do not themselves generate additional effects.

Minions can only receive one Wound are thus removed from play whenever their DT is met or exceeded. Heroes, Toughs, and Beasts may receive multiple wounds. One Wound is added each time the model's DT is met or exceeded. Use tokens, dice, or notes to indicate such wounds.

Example: *John Carter rolls 6 🎲 against a unit of 5 Zodangan Fighting Crew (Minions). He rolls a total of 4 damage, one of which is also an effect, and two misses. The effect allows John to reroll one 🎲 of his choosing. As he cannot generate an effect on such a roll, he scores another point of damage. His attack scores 5 damage in total on the Pirates. Since the Zodangans have a DT of 2, John must score two or more hits to cause a Wound. As Minions, they s can only suffer 1 Wound each. Therefore, John dispatches two of thems with the whirl of his blade. The excess damage is lost, having been a glancing blow or minor flesh wound.*

ADVANCED RULES

Morale & Routing

Oft times, honor earned through war is done so posthumously. It is the Martian way — death before dishonor… except when it isn't. Even in a culture based on honor and respect understands that, sometimes, you must leave the battle to win the war. Morale and routing address these instances.

In the basic game rules, morale is a part of Momentum. The more Momentum a side has, the higher its morale is likely to be — but this is wholly narrative. There are no in-game effects for morale in the basic rules.

In these optional rules, morale becomes a tangible part of the game. It never, ever, applies to Heroes. That is not in the spirit of planetary romance. Your Heroes do not flee unless you make them. The rest of the troops, however, may well want to leave the battlefield long before you're done with them.

Morale is a function of Wounds and Momentum. Essentially, losses create tentative troops unwilling to rush forward into the fray. Instead, they seek cover or remain frozen in place. In game terms, morale costs a player Momentum; for each model a squad or unit removes from their original number due to Wounds, that side's player must spend one Momentum to simply activate them.

Example: *John Carter has just cut through a squad of Tharks. The Tharks started as a squad of 5 models but are now down to just 2. Come their player's next activation phase, it costs 3 Momentum to activate this shaken group. For each Thark dispatched (model removed), they must spend a Momentum every time they activate from that point until the end of the game.*

Any model with the Leadership special ability can automatically reduce the Momentum needed to activate a shaken unit equal to the number or ranks that model has in said ability. To do so, the leader model must be within 6 inches of one model in that squad or units group.

Routing

There are times when troops don't merely ignore orders —they flee the field. This routing is also a function of Momentum. Any unit reduced by 20% of its starting strength (rounding up) will flee unless you spend 1 Momentum to keep them on the board. To get them to activate, you still must spend Momentum as described above.

You'll find there are times when it better to cut your losses, let the dishonorable flee, and focus your efforts on the stalwarts who remain.

Example: *A squad of 5 Helium soldiers are reduced to 2 , having been reduced by much more than 20% of their starting number. During the owning player's turn, 1 Momentum must be spent simply to keep them on the table. As with morale, there are ways to get around this by combining squads. A leader can also "shore up" a squad about to flee. If said leader is within 6 inches of the squad about to flee, the leader makes a Leadership test at DC2. If successful, the troops stay. If the Leadership test fails, the player can still spend the 1 Momentum to keep them in play.*

Command Distance

In the basic game, commanders can order their troops from anywhere on the field. In the advanced rules, this is not the case. Command distance in the advanced game is reduced to 12 inches. However, to make up for the new restriction, the commander (anyone with the Leadership special ability) boosts the attributes of all friendly models by each rank of Leadership taken.

Thus, a group of Helium Fighterss, led by a captain with a Leadership of 1 get +1 to all their attributes while within 12 inches of the leader. As noted under morale, the leader also helps keep troops from hesitating or fleeing altogether. Use them wisely and be sure to target your opponent's leaders!

Having More than One Leader

Prior to the advanced rules, we assumed each side had but one leader. If that leader died, another could be nominated. In the advanced game, sides may have up to two leaders.

Who you choose is up you, but having two leaders increases the effectiveness of troops without having to cluster them all around one model. A squad holding an objective needs to stay on the objective. Leaders help keep their morale strong. Keeping the objectives nets the controlling player extra Momentum each turn, and that can be the difference between victory and defeat.

Assisting, Combining and Splitting Squads

Assisting can only be coordinated by those with the Leadership special ability. Assisting allows a model to combine the efficacy of two units of lower level into one attack or defense. However, the ratio of added dice is not necessarily simply added together as dice caps still apply.

Assisting takes one action for the commander ordering it. The unit must be within 12 inches (or one adjacent zone) of said commander.

Once the action is spent, two units within 4 inches of each other, combine into a single unit. This new unit rolls a number of d20 for attack or defense up to the normal caps for d20. Thus, if two full squads of Minions combine, they roll 5d20 instead of 3d20 . The combined unit now has more models and will retain their full strength longer than separate units — each model killed in a squad of five subtracts 1d20 on the third and further kills. A combined unit can take 4 kills before their strength in combat is reduced.

Heroes and Toughs do not combine to assist each other in these ways unless they are named characters such as John Carter, Dejah Thoris, etc. Unnamed archetypes cannot combine with a named character to form a superior unit.

This also works if a commander wishes to take two weakened squads and combine them into one, strengthened force. That force is harder to destroy by virtue of its numbers but, if comprised of different squad types — perhaps Helium Fighters and some Tharks — it must take the worst stats of either squad upon joining. That means the Tharks lose their higher DT, but function, hopefully, as a full squad or more. Sheer numbers compensate for the abilities lost when unfamiliar fighting styles combine to make a piecemeal force out of battlefield necessity.

Heroes and Toughs can also assist squads in combat (as well as move in conjunction with them). Any Hero or Tough so attached activates with the rest of the unit or vice versa. The new, combined unit still only activates once per turn.

As with combined squads, the unit rolls up to 5d20 in combat. If a tough leads a unit of Minions, Minions are always taken as the first casualties.

There are times when splitting a squad is necessary. For example, you might want to leave one model on a claimed objective so your side keeps generating that Momentum. To do so, you follow the same steps as above but the models that split only gets the basic roll of 2d20 once split. The rest of the squad's dice are lowered as normal. To make up for this deficit, a player no doubt will turn to Momentum.. Be careful how many squads you split, though, or you'll burn through your Momentum simply trying to make them as effective as they were before the split.

OBJECTIVES

A skirmish game is usually about more than slaying the enemy. Squads and Heroes battle to obtain certain objectives, whether it is a particular area of control on the field of battle, a hostage, or a valuable artifact. We breakdown objectives into two kinds, those that are obtained and those that are held.

HELD OBJECTIVES

Usually a terrain feature which, when captured and held, gives one side a distinct advantage. An advantageous spot on the field of battle, or an important thoroughfare or bridge are examples of held objectives. Held objectives award extra Momentum for every round that a given side holds them. They are very important tactically in the game, and often become the center of fierce battles.

OBTAINED OBJECTIVES

Similar to held objectives, they generate bonus Momentum for as long as a given side holds them but, unlike held objectives, are portable and move with the units holding them. Hostages, artifacts and objects are examples of obtained objectives.

Of course, some objectives are part of a given scenario's Victory Conditions, and more valuable than their weight in mere Momentum — they determine the difference between glorious victory and shameful defeat!

Some objectives have special rules attached to them, usually noted in the scenario such as requiring an attribute test to take and move the objective with you. Kidnapping someone could be a DC3 test against an attribute. The unit trying to kidnap the model would need 3 successes under their named attributes target number to succeed. In some instances, such successes can apply from one round to the next, simulating wrestling down a VIP or figuring out a complex artifact's workings.

STATIC OBJECTIVES

Some objectives, usually held objectives, are static and as the name implies, do not move. That means a unit has to stand on that objective and hold it if their want to benefit from the extra Momentum.

A single model of any sort other than Beasts can hold an objective this way. The question becomes how long a lone figure can hold that objective. If the model is a Hero, this possesses less of an issue but does keep the Hero from other parts of the fray. If a single member of a squad breaks off they too can hold the objective but it much less secure. These tactical decisions must be made on a case-by-case basis. There's no right or wrong strategy until somebody loses.

HOLDING AN OBJECTIVE

A lone figure can stay on a claimed objective, but may be easily forced off. If a unit is standing on a static objective or obtains an objective, unless otherwise stated, the unit automatically takes control of the objective. If that unit is slain, the attacker then automatically takes the objective.

Leaving a Hero or squad on the objective is safer, but then you may not have them when and where you most need them. Tactical decisions like this from the basis of the ***2d20 Skirmish*** system.

WINNING THE GAME

Victory conditions are usually scenario specific. For those not using a specific scenario or who wish for a shorter game, players total the number of Momentum that would be left on each side during the next refresh phase, subtracting any Momentum saved. The total Momentum would equal that generated by models still in play and objectives held. The player with the most Momentum wins. When playing with this victory condition, Momentum is tallied after a given number of turns, usually 6.

Regardless of victory conditions, a side automatically wins if their opponent has no more models on the table or decides to concede.

MARTIAN FLIERS

Barsoom mastered flight while Earthborn were still struggling with language. Yet, this has world lost much of its technology. The airships that remain hint at the great heights to which cities such as Helium once rose. More importantly, it's fun to ram them into each other and launch boarding actions. The following rules are not a simulation of how actual airships might perform any more than the *John Carter* stories are an attempt to recreate some authentic era. Put simply, they are here to enhance your fun. The eighth ray makes these constructed beasts float, beyond that lies too much math and aerodynamics for pulp entertainment.

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

- Dice
- Model Airships, '*Airships of Barsoom Adventure Tile Set*' or your own home drawn airship map.
- ***John Carter of Mars*** Miniatures
- A table, or area to play, at least 4 by 4 feet. 6 by 4 feet is preferred.

The *Airships of Barsoom Adventure Tile* set provides a number of small airships and various large airship tile sections allowing you to construct a variety of different ships.

PROFILES

Much like the models, the Martian fliers are assigned a series of statistics to show how they perform in the game.

- **Speed**
- **Hull Points**
- **Maneuverability**

SPEED

Some fliers move upwards of 300 miles per hour in Jasoomian terms. We can't hope to replicate that on a 4 by 4 or 6 by 4 table. Therefore, we determine that the action all takes place during a short space of the ships movement. Simply take any small tile (12cm x 24cm) and use the long edge as a unit of speed (or if you prefer to measure it's 24cm). How fast the ships move is given in these speed units.

HULL POINTS

Hull Points are like Wounds for any other model. Once they've taken their total allotment, the ship goes down. The craft we're dealing with at this level aren't well armored; so all damage thresholds are 2. However, that number doesn't mean you can easily take out a flier with your radium gun. If not using a flier-mounted weapon against another flier, your damage only counts as half rounded down.

MANEUVERABILITY

Fliers can be quite agile, but we aren't looking at dogfighting rules here. Instead, we simply want to turn the ships so they can fire upon each other, board each other and, of course, ram each other. To that end, ships can make an automatic 90-degree turn once per Movement. The DC for such a piloting test is (DC2). Any successes above 2 allow the ship to make another 90-degree turn as it flies.

However, there must be one distance unit moved between each 90-degree turn. You do not have to turn the full 90 degrees, but you cannot move more than that on a single turn. The target number for the turning test is equal to the Maneuverability value of a flier.

Example: *A Zodangan pirate flier is engaged with a Helium scout ship. The pirates want to turn around and ram the other ship since it smaller than theirs (*for more on this see ramming on page 93*). In this case, the small scout flier is directly behind the medium-sized pirate ship. The pirate pilot uses Momentum to buy 3d20 for a total of 5d20. He scores three successes against a target number of 13 for his ship's Maneuverability, one more than he needed. The ship can therefor make two turns up to 90 degrees or lesser turns as it moves.*

FLIER CLASSES

Barsoomian airships are many and varied, but for the purposes of this miniatures game we reduce them to four categories. Along with each category are stats, much like any other model. The four classes of flier, in order of size, are:

GROUND FLIER

SPEED	HULL POINTS	MANEUVER.
5	5	16

SMALL FLIER

SPEED	HULL POINTS	MANEUVER.
6	10	15

MEDIUM FLIER

SPEED	HULL POINTS	MANEUVER.
5	14	13

BULK FLIER

SPEED	HULL POINTS	MANEUVER.
3	20	9

THE AIRSHIP ACTIVATION

Fliers add another unit to the turn. Though they aren't soldiers, they do count as units. As such, players can activate them as desired. More often than not, fliers jockey for a superior position to attack, board, or both.

The airship activation breaks down into two sub-phases just like other activations: moving and attacking. That's all the airships can do. As in true ***John Carter*** style, it's the heroes who shape the narrative, not the technology. The rules for fliers, as noted, aren't meant to be precise, but rather let you have a taste of aerial combat before a boarding action occurs. A flier cannot claim an objective but can, itself, be an objective if noted in a given scenario.

In fact, some scenarios may assume the boarding action began before play started, in which case the airships need not move at all, nor can they attack with mounted weapons, as the two ships are simply to close.

Each activation of a ship counts as the activation of a single model. Treat the flier as just another unit on the table. It moves and fires as the payer wishes. You cannot activate any ship more than once in a round, but you can give a ship a third action by spending the required Momentum.

RAMMING

There's nothing quite as satisfying as crashing our models together and making explosion noises. Admit it, you do it too. Now, while we don't want to destroy our nicely painted models, miniatures, or newly acquired tiles, imagining them exploding in balls of fire is one of the reasons gamers come to the table.

It would be remiss to have airship rules where you couldn't ram your opponent. It's best to think of it simply — heavier ships do more damage on attacks, and where a ship gets rammed also determines how bad things are.

Therefore, we only need to know the class of the two ships colliding and the nature of the collision — head on, side or bumped.

A head on collision in includes two fliers hitting bow to bow or one bow hitting the side of another flier directly.

- Side collisions are sideswipes, and often presage a boarding attempt.
- A bump is simply when one ship hits another from behind.

There is to test to do damage during a ram. The position of the ships on the table determines whether or not they can collide. The only random factor is damage.

- Small fliers inflict 4 🎲 of damage in a ram.
- Medium fliers inflict 8 🎲 of damage in a ram.
- Bulk fliers inflict 12 🎲 of damage in a ram.

Effects can be used to reroll failed dice as in normal combat. You cannot spend Momentum to increase this damage. Each category is halved for a side hit and quartered for a bump.

HITTING THE EIGHTH RAY TANKS

In the *John Carter* stories, sharp-eyed shooters can hit the tanks holding the eighth ray, thus causing them to rupture. This requires a very precise shot, as the tanks are thick and generally well protected.

However, this is pulp, so a lone man with a radium rifle can conceivably shoot a flier out of the sky. When so doing, the DC of hitting the tank is a whopping DC5, while its damage threshold is 4. It's not easy, but it is possible.

When a tank ruptures, we assume the others go with it and the entire ship goes down in flames. This can lead to some very quick victories and astoundingly short lives. Players can disregard this rule at their preference.

Another option is to treat the tanks like Wounds — a small flier can receive no more than 1, a medium 2 and a bulk 3. Thus, an opponent must inflict a Wound 1 to 3 times to take down a craft based on size.

Shooting at an Airship

Just as on the ground, Barsoomians prefer blades over radium guns — but that doesn't mean they don't use the latter. Every flier has at least one radium canon. The locations and number of these canons are show on the *John Carter tile sets*. If you are not using the tile sets, assume that small fliers have one, medium fliers have between 1 and 3 (two at the stern, one at the bow) and bulks have between 3 and 5 (one at the bow, two at the stern and one either side in the middle of the ship). It is best to agree the exact number before play. So, long as you can draw line of sight within a 180-degree arc from the cannon, the shot is valid.

We assume each cannon is crewed by one of your ***John Carter*** miniatures. However, rather than adding a heavy weapon stat, the Ranged Attack attribute for a given ship is equal to its Maneuverability. We assume the airships have a Ranged Defense value also equal to their Maneuverability.

Resolve shooting as normal. In the case of shooting at an airship, you can spend Momentum to improve your odds. A radium cannon does a number of 🎲 of damage, before spending Momentum, equal to the number of its class — 1 for small, 2 for medium, and 3 for bulk.

Boarding

Airships immediately call to mind boarding actions, and this is where most of the action should take place in a skirmish game like ***John Carter***. Blade to blade is the most honorable form of combat and, to achieve that, ships need to get close to each other.

To board a ship must be in one of two circumstances, ramming with a head on or side collision or the ship being in a parallel position to the target no more than 6 inches away.

- **Ramming:** Any direct contact in a head on or side collision allows for boarding. However, boarding from the bow of the ship limits the movement of personnel to 2 models per action. There simply isn't enough area to properly board from the bow. Doing so causes a natural choke point that favors the opposing vessel. Boarding from the side allows as many models as in range to leap or swing to the other ship. If boarding from a side collision, follow the rules below for using a boarding plank.
- **Parallel position:** A ship must be in a parallel position to the target no more than 6 inches away. Further, two-thirds of the instigating ship's tile must also be able to come parallel to the target ship. Players are encouraged to eyeball this factor and note that a larger ship may easily encompass the profile of a smaller ship.

Once the two ships are within the above boarding parameters, the boarding action can proceed.

BOARDING PLANKS

Every ship has a boarding plank that allows up to one squad, or five models, to cross per turn.

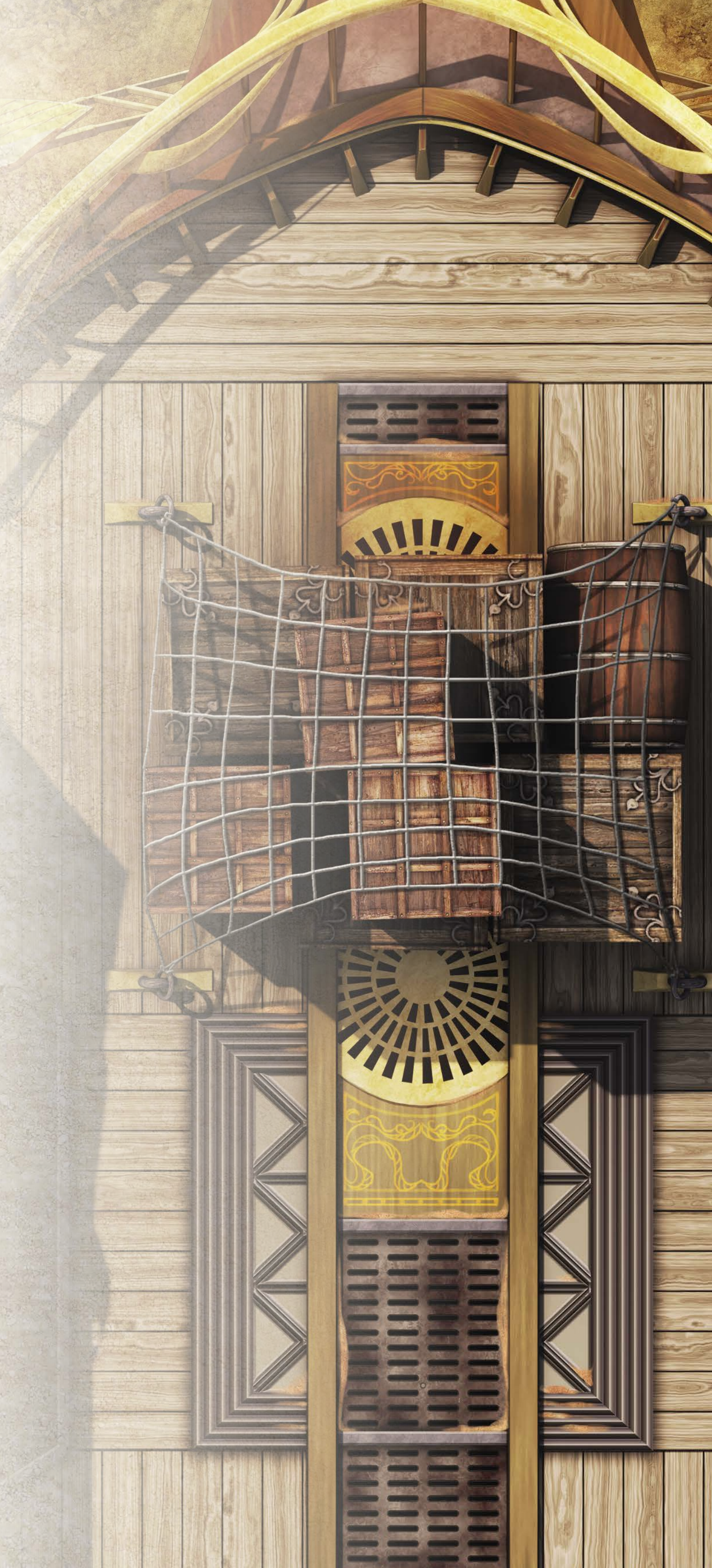
LEAPING ACROSS

If a player wants to leap, thus getting as many troops over at once as possible, you make a Ranged Defense test at DC1 for each model. Failure means the model plunges to its death unless the height of the battle was previously agreed to be very near the ground. In that case, a model takes 2 🎲 for every ten Earth feet they fall. Momentum comes in very handy in this instance, but be sure you have enough left for the fight into which you just wildly leapt.

Optionally, players may decide that, so long as two ships are within 3 inches of each other, a grappling attempt can be made. Said attempt is made as an opposed roll using the highest Ranged Attack on either side at a DC 1 test. You may spend Momentum on this as normal.

Controlling a Flier

All enemy combatants must be dispatched before any ship loses control to another player. If there is a squad and Hero on the flier they must be eliminated or pushed off. *See the rule for pushbacks on page 87.*



Unit Profiles

The following unit profiles represent some of the warriors and beasts, heroes and villains found on Barsoom.

Squads

The squad is the base of all Martian fighting forces. Naturally, an army comprises many squads, but this is a skirmish game and so it is our largest unit. They operate in numbers of five. The leader models have different stats but, unless otherwise specified in a scenario or agreed on by both players, the miniatures simply represent another soldier on the table.

Minions

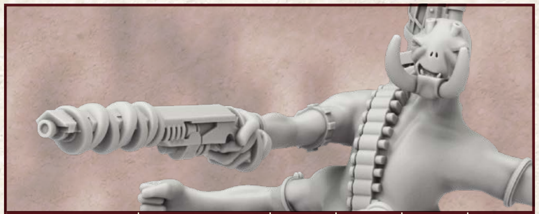
HELIUM FIGHTER

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
11	10	11	10	2	2	1	-

Special Abilities: Discipline
Weapons: Swords, Radium Pistols

The remnants of the great civilizations of Barsoom scatter the desiccating world. Yet proud Helium and its environs give some sense of the world's previous splendor. Defending her, and the civilization that remains, are the great warriors of Helium. They are well trained and motivated, and practice excellent tactics in battle.

THARKS



Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
12	12	11	10	2	3	1	0

Special Abilities: Four-Armed for War
Weapons: Swords, Radium Rifles

These green Martians were the first to find the Earthborn John Carter. Their ways are strange to the people of Earth, but also strange to many of Barsoom's other native civilizations. They were mired in malevolent barbarism before Carter showed them another way.

RED MARTIAN RIFLEMAN

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
11	10	13	12	2	2	1	-

Special Abilities: Rifleman
Weapons: Swords, Radium Rifles

Red Martians follow Martian law and honor, but also use ranged weapons, as do their foes. A Rifleman is accurate, highly motivated, and used to fighting in harsh conditions. While they are experts with radium rifles, they loath to fire on others not so armed.

ZODANGAN FIGHTING CREW

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
12	12	11	10	2	3	1	3

Special Abilities: Shootist
Weapons: Swords, Radium Rifles

Red Martians like the people of Helium, Zodanga wars with the larger empire and often resorts to piracy.

TOUGHS

SOLA

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
13	12	11	11	3	3	2	1

Special Abilities: Four-Armed for War
Weapons: Sword, Radium pistol

Sola's mother defied green Martain law and raised her daughter as her own, rather than as a communal child. This produced a uniquely empathetic Thark, and one who first befriended John Carter.

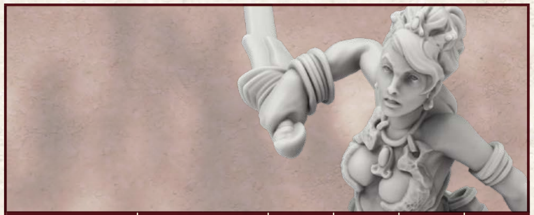
KANTOS KAN

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
14	13	13	13	4	3	2	3

Special Abilities: A Friend in Need *(Kantos Kan gains a free Momentum anytime one of his actions assist John Carter or Dejah Thoris)*
Weapons: Sword

A red Martian legend, Kantos Kan is honorable, capable and, when necessary, deadly.

LLANA OF GATHOL

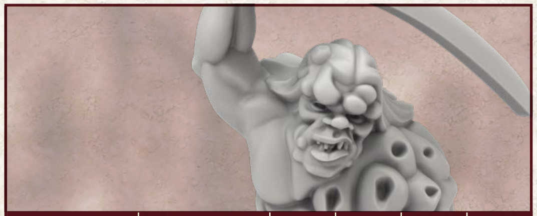


Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
12	11	11	11	3	3	2	1

Special Abilities: None
Weapons: Sword

An adventurous spirit, Llana gets her mettle from her grandparents, John Carter and Dejah Thoris.

SYNTHETIC MEN



Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
12	13	12	13	3	3	2	2*

** For recovering from Wounds only.*

Special Abilities: You Think You've Killed Me? *(Synthetic Men can use a 1 point of Luck to recover from 1 Wound)*

These manmade horrors have extra limbs, eyes and other features misplaced, and exist as abominations on Barsoom. However, they are tough, and their ability to regenerate their ruined bodies make them formidable opponents.

Heroes

JOHN CARTER

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
15 (16)[1]	14 (15)[2]	13 (14)[3]	13	5	4	4	3

[1] With Duelist 1 / [2] With Parry 1 / [3] With Shootist 1 (Pistol only)

Special Abilities: Leaps and Bounds, Duelist 1, Parry 1, Shootist 1, Leadership 3

Weapons: Sword, Radium Pistol

A native of Earth, John Carter fought in the bloody American Civil war only to later find his life force transported to Mars. He is the greatest warrior Barsoom has ever known.

TARS TARKAS

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
14 (15)[4]	14	13 (14)[5]	13	5	4	4	3

[4] With Duelist 1 / [5] With Rifleman 1

Special Abilities: Rifleman 1, Four-Armed for War, Duelist 1

Weapons: Sword, Radium Rifle

A green Martian of legendary fighting ability, Tarkas is also Jeddak of his people.

DEJAH THORIS

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
13	12	12	12	4	3	3	2

Special Abilities: Leadership 2, Ace Pilot

Weapons: Sword, Radium Pistol

The beautiful Princess of Helium, ,Dejah Thoris is also a capable fighter in her own right. Eventually, Dejah and Carter marry.

TAN HADRON

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
13 (14)[1]	13	12	12	3	2	2	12

[1] With Duelist 1

Special Abilities: Duelist 1, Leadership 2

Weapons: Swords, Radium Rifle

A proud warrior of Helium, Hadron hails from the city of Hastor. His martial discipline is typical of his lineage.

THUVIA OF PTARTH

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
12	12	11	11	3	3	2	1

Special Abilities: Leadership 2

Weapons: Sword

Heir to the red Martian kingdom of Ptarth, Thuvia is a capable leader who one marries John Carter's son, Carthoris.

TARA OF HELIUM

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
12	12	12	12	3	3	3	2

Special Abilities: Leadership 1

Weapons: Sword Radium Pistol

Daughter of John Carter and Dejah Thoris, Tara combines her parent's best qualities without inheriting the impulsiveness of her father.

CARTHORIS

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
13	13	11	11	4	3	3	2

Special Abilities: Leaps and Bounds

Weapons: Sword, Radium Pistol

The son of Dejah Thoris and John Carter, Carthoris spends his early life unaware of his true lineage. Even still, he has many of his father's Earthborn gifts as well as his mother's red Martian heritage.

TARDOS MORS

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
12 (14)[2]	14	13	13	4	4	3	3

[2] *With Duelist 2*

Special Abilities: Duelist 2, Leadership 3

Weapons: Sword, Radium Pistol

Jeddak of Helium and father of Dejah Thoris, Tardos is skilled, beloved, and competent. His people follow him with pride.

RAS THAVAS

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
9	9	9	9 (14)[3]	4	3	2	1

[2] *With Raygun*

Special Abilities: Leadership 2, Ray Gun (Range 18 inches, 4 🎲 damage)

Weapons: Ray Gun

This archetypal mad scientist perfected the art of brain transplants as well as other nigh-impossible accomplishments. In play, he is armed with a ray gun of his own design.

TAL HAJUS

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
14	14	13	13	4	4	3	3

Special Abilities: Four-Armed for War, Leadership 2

Weapons: Swords and Radium Pistols

A corpulent, malign Jeddak of the Tharks, Hajus rules only by fear and cunning.

SAB THAN

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
13	13	12	12	3	3	3	2

Special Abilities: Nnone

Weapons: Ray Weapons: Sword, Radium Pistol

A prince of Zodanga and son of Jeddak Than Kosis, Sab's ambitions may exceed his ability. He is an enemy to John Carter.

BEASTS

APT

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
15	15	-	-	4	4	4	-

Special Abilities: None
Weapons: Natural Claws, Teeth, and Strength (3 🎲 base damage)

White, furry hulks with ovoid eyes, apts are deadly predators who, once locked onto their prey, can stalk it for a month without sleep.

BANTH

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
14	14	13	13	2	4	4	-

Special Abilities:
- Apex Predator *(The Banth is a fearsome opponent. In melee its base damage is 3 🎲)*
- Flurry of Claws *(Any time the Banth's Melee Defense roll beats its opponent, the Banth's may make an immediate free Counterattack)*
- Terrifying Roar *(Upon first hearing the Banth roar, all models within 15 inches must pass a (DC4) Ranged Defense test or lose their next activation. Once the roar is heard, the effect does not apply again to those who previously heard it. However, it can affect new units that were not previously affected.*

This terrifying Barsoomian predator can bring a foe to heel merely through its ferocious roar.

PLANT MAN

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
13	13	-	13	3	2	202	-

Special Abilities:
- Tail Lash *(1 bonus d20 in Melee Attacks)*
- Leap *(8 inches, counts as charge if leaping into melee)*

Weapons: None

The blue-skinned, cyclopean plant man is one of the strangest sentient races on Barsoom. Agile and strong, they possess a long tail they use in attacks.

WHITE APE

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
15	15	12	13	4	4	3	-

Special Abilities:
- Leaps and Bounds
- Base 4 🎲 (does not halve damage against fliers)

Weapons: None, but not considered "Unarmed"

Perhaps the most feared predator on Barsoom, white apes have been known to take down an airship if it flies too low.

WOOLA

Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
13	13	-	14	3	4	3	

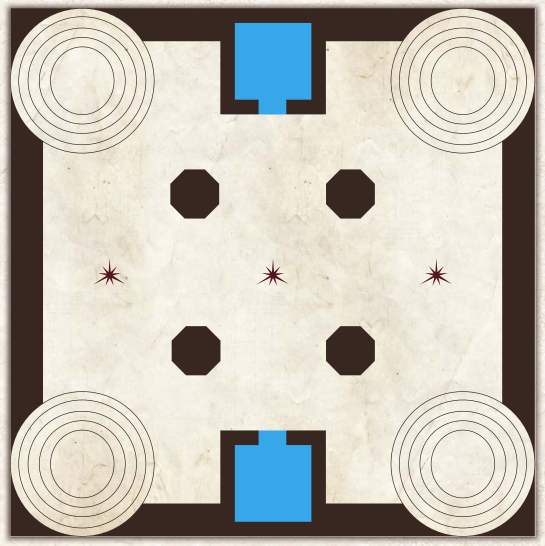
Special Abilities:
- Unbeaten Speed *(The calot can move faster than any other Martian beast. Woola moves 8 inches per action)*
- Vicious Bite *(Calots deal 2 🎲 basic damage when they bite)*

A domesticated calot who proves invaluable to its friends.

YOUR FIRST GAME: THE ARENA

The first game is classic Barsoom—an arena fight! Gladiatorial combat is the sport of this dying world, and the sands of Mars are thirsty for blood. Three objectives exist in the arena, and capturing (and holding them) is key to victory. On one side are Tharks and red Martian slaves, while on the other are three Heroes and single unit of Zondangan Pirates forced into the melee. All combatants fight for their life under the shifting rays of Barsoom.

SET UP



The two opposing sides start on opposite ends of the area in the designated starting areas. Within that area, players may set up their forces as desired.

Three objectives (marked ✶), each worth 5 points of Momentum, are located across the central line of the area on the lateral axis.

FORCES

The following forces are used.

VILLAINS

- 1 squad of 5 Tharks
- 1 squad of 5 Zodangan Pirates (use Zodangan Fighting Crew stats and models)
- Red Martian Captain (use Tan Hadron stats and model)
- White Ape

HEROES

- John Carter
- Dejah Thoris
- Tars Tarkas
- 1 squad of 5 Red Martian Riflemen

SPECIAL RULES

The game lasts 9 turns.

Reinforcements: After turn 2, the villains can spend 5 Momentum to summon another squad of 5 Zodangan Pirates.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

This is a fight to the death. One side must wipe out the other or force surrender. There is little honor in surrendering.

ONE-SHOT SCENARIOS

As ***Swords of Mars 2d20 Skirmish*** doesn't have a standard points system where you buy your piecemeal, we've instead included many one-off scenarios. These are straightforward skirmish battles using the current collection of our *John Carter* miniatures.

These are friendly games rather than tournament games. Our goal is to provide a fun, relatively quick battle that might have taken place somewhere in the mind of Edgar Rice Burroughs.

Read through these scenarios and play them as you like. Alternate sides from one game to the next and even play the same scenario running each side.

These are quick to play, and a pair of gamers (or a group) could easily play four scenarios in an evening. This is about good, pulp fun, and pulp moves at a rapid pace. That said, each battle presented offers different options for tactics, and each demands players allocate their Momentum wisely.

Some scenarios are the standard fare you find in any miniatures skirmish game — ambushes, rescues, and the like. Others are different, giving players a break from the standard "set up on opposite sides of the board and try to kill each other model." The goal here is to have fun.

USING THESE RULES

The rules and scenarios in this book give you a tool kit to do with as you like. You can house-rule, mix in advanced rules, and even create far larger armies. The adventures don't stop at the end of this book anymore than Carter's adventures stopped in the cultural landscape after his creator passed.

CREATING YOUR OWN SCENARIOS

The games outlined here are only a handful of possibilities.

This is a pulp game. When making your own adventures, don't look at it as a competition but an opportunity to explore tactics with the 2d20 system. Balance in this game comes down to how much Momentum a side generates naturally, their attributes, and their focus. Look to those elements to tweak you own armies.

The best advice we can give you is to consider a squad as capable of defeating another squad but probably only slowing down a hero. If you balance the number of heroic single figures with the number of squads, many new scenarios are possible. An all hero team could fight nothing but waves of squads, or you could leave squads out all together and fight only with powerful models. If you keep that balance right, the scenario produced tends to lean fair. Of course, in a miniatures game, like in war, nothing is ever completely fair.

MASS COMBAT

Great green Martian hordes once sacked Zodanga. Huge armies clash in Burroughs' mindscape across his dying world. These rules only cover skirmish combat, because our miniature line is intended for such games. However, one could easily take other miniatures and use them to represent large scale combat. You can scale up squads as representing dozens or hundreds of troops and keep the heroes relatively few.

SCENARIO 1: LAST THARK STANDING

Drunk and squabbling over recent loot, a number of Tharks get into a fight while encamped. The rest of the tribe forms a circle around them to see who wins or who quits. The loot isn't worth fighting over, and the belligerents stumbled into this with too much drink and too much bravado. But, being Tharks, none want to back down. They are ready to beat each other into the Barsoomian dirt.

SET UP

Draw a rough circle around a 2 by 2 foot area. This is the ring formed by the other Tharks. There are no objectives other than to be the last Thark standing.

FORCES

There are no sides in this fray. Each player selects one Thark to play, and then has at it. Each Thark starts with the base stats for a Thark but is later customized to create a more unique individual. There are no heroes or villains, just angry green Martians.

SPECIAL RULES

The nature of this scenario requires a number of special rules. Given that, it's best to play this battle when in the mood to experiment with the game or tired of the standard fair.

INITIATIVE

Since more than two sides may participate, the usual initiative structure won't work. Instead, every Thark rolls 2d20 as a Melee Attack test of DC1. The Thark with the most Momentum goes first, second most goes second, and so on. Any who fail go last. All players may spend Momentum on these rolls.

If there are ties, the Thark that has taken the least amount of Wounds goes first. Still tied? Roll off d20s and low scores go before higher.

MOMENTUM

Every Thark starts with 6 Momentum to spend as they like. To gain more, they must down an opponent. Whoever deals the blow that puts a green Martian down gets 3 Momentum, as if holding an objective.

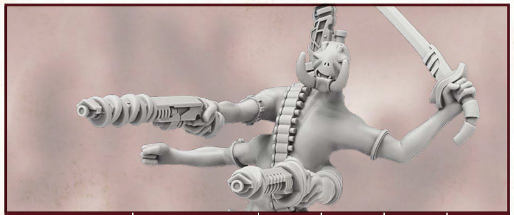
OBJECTIVES

- Every other opponent on the board is an objective to each other.

POINTS

Each Thark begins with the stats listed below. Then each player gets 10 points to "buy" advancements for their model. Different enhancements vary in cost. Do you want to deliver bone-crushing hits and dump most of your points into Melee Attack, or would you like to be tough as radium and raise your Wounds to 4? It's up to each player to decide.

THARK



Melee		Ranged		F	DT	W	L
Att	Def	Att	Def				
12	12	11	10	2	3	3*	0

**For this battle only*

Special Abilities: Four-Armed for War

Weapons: Swords or blunt instruments.

Taking the above stats as a base, each player now builds a unique warrior by spending their points. The cost of raising traits appears below.

- **Raise Melee Attack:** 2 points per raise
- **Raise Melee Defense:** 2 points per raise
- **Raise Focus:** 3 points per raise
- **Raise DT:** 4 points per raise
- **Raise Wounds:** 4 points per raise

VICTORY CONDITIONS

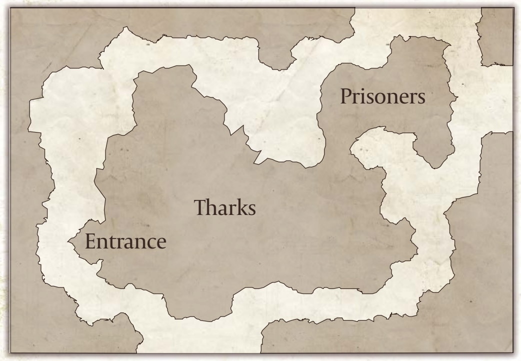
The title says it all. Last Thark standing wins.

Scenario 2: Damn Men, Always in Distress

While tales of Barsoom leaned upon the damsel in distress more than once, Burroughs also wrote capable female characters. In this scenario, the trope of the captured princess is upended. This time, it is the men who are taken captive. It is up to the women to save them.

Camped in the barrens on the edge of civilization, a group of red Martians drank under the blossom of bright stars and the canopy of night. The men imbibed too much and foolishly set off wandering. The women set out to search for them and came upon evidence showing the men were taken by green Martian slavers. Taking up swords and pistols, the four women set after the group of Tharks. They'll not have the men kidnapped even if they are foolish.

Set Up



The quartet followed the Tharks to a camp in a shallow valley protected against the night's wind. The Tharks sit around a small fire while the men are well-bound along the steepest edge of the valley on the opposite end of the board from where the heroes enter.

The men count as objectives, even if freed. They were drunk before and have since been beaten soundly by the Tharks. They are dead weight.

Forces

Four heroic red Martians take on an elite squad of Tharks and their leader.

HEROES

- Four red Martian warriors. All female. Use the stats and models of Dejah Thoris, Tara, Llana, and Thuvia.

VILLAINS

- 1 squad of 5 Tharks
- 1 Thark Leader (use Tal Hajus stats and model)

Special Rules

There are three captured men. Each counts as an objective worth 3 Momentum. There are five banths here which as count as objectives if secured by other side. The banths are trained and defer to whoever wants to use them as mounts.

The men are a burden to carry, being drunk and injured. Getting them to a banth or off the board means carrying them at least part way. Freeing a man takes one action. Once freed, he costs one Momentum each phase to move. Note, the men are not actually being moved but carried. Once the women get to the banths, they no long need pay the Momentum to carry the men.

The women can also free the men and fight the Tharks whilst said men remain slumped against the rocky Barsoomian ground. If so, each freed male counts as an objective as noted previously. The Tharks can recapture any man by coming within one inch of them and spending one action. No one can free a man with an enemy within 1 inch. Momentum from the newly taken objective is given immediately, but any remaining Momentum from the loser of said objective, does not disappear until the refresh phase.

Victory Conditions

The women must get off the board from the same edge they entered with the men. The Tharks must stop the women.

Objectives

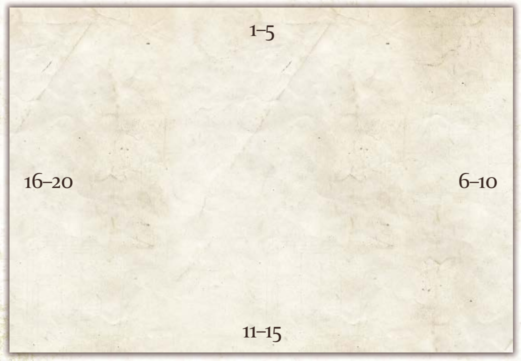
- The primary objectives are the men and the banths. Each takes an action to claim —no test is needed — and each count as 3 Momentum for the side that claimed them.

Scenario 3: Sandstorm!

A group of pirates has made off with some loot. Unfortunately for them, Lesser Helium has a dozen naval fliers right behind them. The pirate's captain decides on a bold gambit. A mighty storm brews just to the east, and he steers his vessels toward it. Sure enough, the sand rakes across the ships, causing damage, and all but two of the Helium vessels get lost.

Those two, however, continue the chase until the two Helium naval vessels and two pirate vessels find themselves in the relative calm eye of the maelstrom. The sand bites at the flesh and makes it difficult to see. Trapped in this central gyre are two bitter enemies — only one side is likely to prevail.

Set Up



Use a 4 by 4 foot board or, if available, a 6 by 4 foot board. This scenario focuses on the flier's engagement, though troops are likely to try to board one another's ships. Place the pirate vessels anywhere within the approximate center of the board.

The Helium player then decides which board edge they wish to deploy from. Their ships may deploy 3 inches from that chosen edge. Once the ships are so deployed, the storm acts as an effective barrier on all edges. No one can pass through with their ship intact.

At the end of turn 6, a narrow corridor opens on a random table edge. Roll 1d20. On 1-5, it is the north edge; 6-10 the east edge, 11-15 the south edge, 16-20 the west edge. The pirates can make their escape through this gap and evade the naval ships, which, for purposes of this scenario, cannot fit easily into the afforded corridor.

Forces

Four fliers split across two opposing sides square off in this engagement. Treat all as medium fliers armed with two radium canons each.

PIRATES

- Pirate Captain (use the model and stats for Sab Than)
- 2 squads of 4 Zodnagan Pirates (use the models and stats for Zodangan Fighting Crew)
- 2 medium fliers (one squad on each flier)

HELIUM NAVY

- Naval Captain (use the model and stats for Tan Hadron)
- 2 squads of 4 Helium Fighters
- 2 medium fliers

Special Rules

The sand causes any Ranged Attack test to have a difficulty class 1 step higher than usual. It does not impede Melee Attacks.

Victory Conditions

The pirates must hold out until the corridor opens and then get at least one ship off that board edge. Where on the edge they leave is not important.

The Helium navy must stop all pirates from escaping.

Objectives

- This battle has no static objectives as everything moves.
- Capturing an enemy flier is worth 5 Momentum.
- Downing an enemy flier is worth 3 Momentum.
- Killing the enemy captain is worth 5 Momentum.

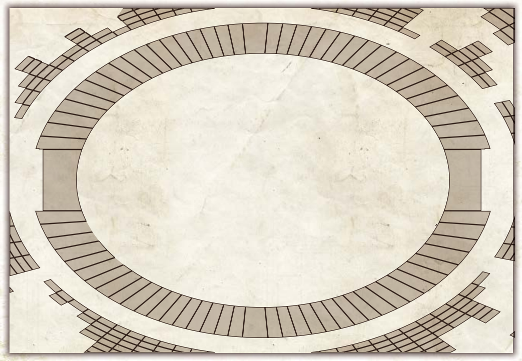
SCENARIO 4: BARSOOMIAN BREAD AND CIRCUSES

There are pleasures and recreations found in mighty Helium, but the most popular fad is that of ground flier racing. In a great coliseum, fans gather to watch these Barsoomian "chariot races." Entire fortunes are won and lost on wagers placed on pilots and their teams.

These fliers are built so that the engine and eighth ray tanks are in front and pull the vehicle behind via a yoke. While not the blood sport arenas seen in the green Martian lands, participants are often injured and crashes — or rival teams — can be deadly.

It is a good day to see the race and an even better day to participate in it.

SET UP



An oval shaped track of some sort should be laid out on a 6 by 4 table. Pick a starting point for the fliers. This point also marks laps. The race lasts for three laps. Whoever crosses the finish line first wins. If no one crashes the finish line, the pilot who can stand on their own amidst the wreckage is declared winner. The board edges serve as the walls of the coliseum.

Additionally, one flag for each team is propped along the outside wall of the track at 16 inch intervals.

FORCES

This is a special scenario, and the number of players determines the number of flier teams. Each flier has a team of two. One is the pilot the other is called the blade. The blade can attack other blades, pilots, and even the engines and tanks of the vehicles.

For a two-player game, each player should control two or three teams. If you have four or more players, each player can control a single team and flier.

Pilots have the stats of Tan Hadron for this race. Blades use the stats for Kantos Kan. You may use any miniatures you like.

- One pilot, one blade, and one flier per team. Use a small airship tile each (or a ship model 120mm x 240mm)

SPECIAL RULES

All rules for airships are in place for this scenario. Further, no one can use ranged weapons. If someone wants to burst the eighth ray tank of an opponent's flier, they make a DC3 Melee Attack opposed to the Ranged Defense of the pilot in the target vessel. This must be a blade attack within two inches of the front of the flier.

Ramming applies just as in the flier rules. Treat all pilots as having the Airship Pilot special ability at rank 2.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The first flier over the finish line wins. Failing that, whoever has the most standing figures at the end wins. If more than one can stand, the teams resort to hand-to-hand combat and running to finish the race. Halve normal movement for running models to compensate for the speed difference in the fliers. For example, a double move nets a model only 6 inches of movement, not 12.

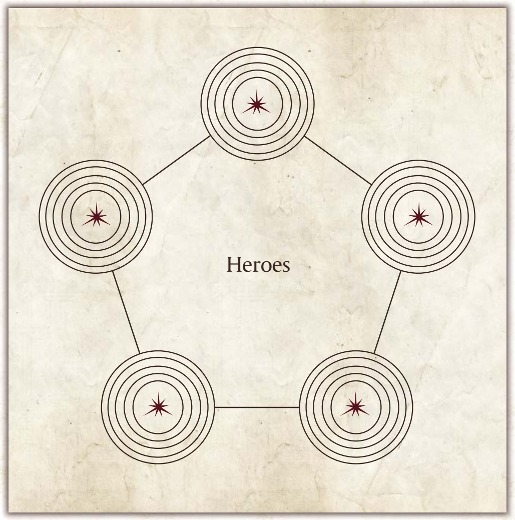
OBJECTIVES

- Each team starts with 6 Momentum.
- Each team earn 6 more Momentum each time they pass a lap.
- Each team earn 4 Momentum for taking out another blade.
- Each team earn 5 Momentumfor taking out a pilot.
- Each team earn 7 Momentum for causing an explosion — the crowd loves that.
- There are three flags for each side. The flags are not coded to a given team, but are goals. Taking a flag at full movement is a DC3 Ranged Attack. Each flag confers 3 Momentum to that team.

SCENARIO 5: BESTIARII

In the course of their adventures, or in this case misadventures, three heroes find themselves stuck in a green Martian fighting arena. Their opponents? Beasts controlled by skilled handlers.

SET UP



The heroes deploy in the center of the area. The arena should be at least 3 by 3 feet square. Plinths are spaced evenly around the arena, 5 in all. Atop each is a flag worth 3 Momentum as an objective. One player takes control of the beasts and one or more play the heroes.

Players may use John Carter, Tarks Tarkas, and Dejah Thoris if they so wish. If not, simply use their stats.

FORCES

As it was in the pulp tales of Burroughs, man and beast meet in the liminal zone between the savage and the civilized.

HEROES

- John Carter (or other named character)
- Dejah Thoris (or other named character)
- Tarks Tarkas (or other named character)

BEASTS

- Apt
- Banth
- White Ape

SPECIAL RULES

The plinths take two actions to climb. Anyone can jump down and land safely after. John Carter, if used, can simply jump atop the plinths and claim the flags. Grabbing the flag is a DC2 Ranged Attack test. You may be attacked while atop a plinth, but the attacker makes their test at DC2.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

Arena life is simple. One either lives or one dies. The games do not end until one side lies bloody in the sand.

OBJECTIVES

- The Heroes gain 3 Momentum for each flag captured.
- The Beasts gain 5 Momentum for every hero dispatched.
- Each side generates Momentum as normal.

SCENARIO 6: ATTACK OF THE SYNTHETIC MEN

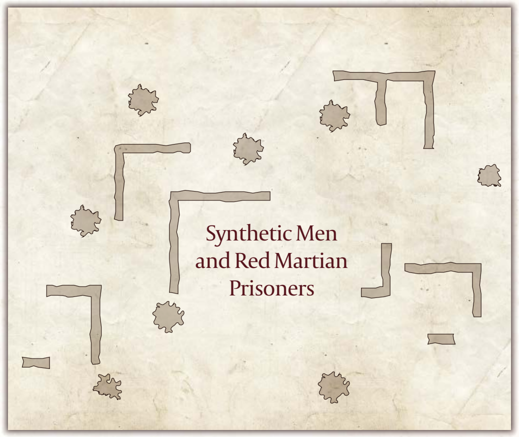
Though vanquished long ago, Synthetic Men still roam Barsoom. Recently, a trio of them have taken to raiding trade routes out of Zodanga. The city cannot tolerate this, as the merchants are up in arms. Supplies and commerce are hard enough on this world.

More than that, the secret of how Synthetic Men are grown might be divined if a living sample found its way into the hands of a malicious scientist. The city settles on sending out patrols to find the redoubt where the horrors hide themselves as night falls.

The particular patrol is led by an experienced officer. His mission is to kill all the synthetic men found.

Their lair is in an ancient ruin outside Zodanga.

SET UP



On a 3 by 3, or 4 by 4 table, set ruins up so they cover about 50% of the lines of fire. Add any rocks and plants as agreed on by both players. The synthetic men have three red Martians prisoner. They are at the center of this improvised camp.

Because the heroes are on the hunt, they automatically gain initiative the first turn.

FORCES

Synthetic versus red Martians, who will win?

HEROES

- Martian Officer (use the model and stats for Tan Hadron)
- 2 squads of 5 Zodangan Fighting Crew (Use Helium Fighters to proxy for the Zodangans if necessary).

VILLAINS

- 3 Synthetic Men

SPECIAL RULES

There are no special rules for this scenario.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

If one or more Synthetic Men survive 5 turns, they are the victors.

The heroes must kill all three Synthetic Men before the end of turn 5.

OBJECTIVES

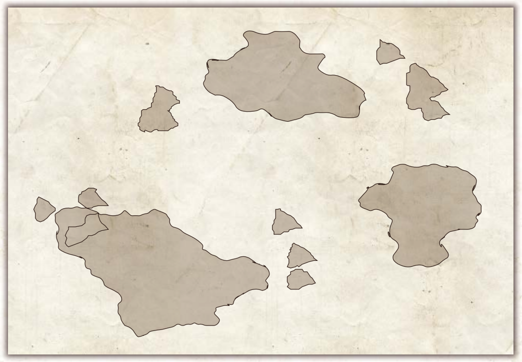
Each prisoner is worth 3 Momentum. Two of the larger ruins are highly defensible and each is worth 5 Momentum. Note that the Synthetic Men do not begin within 14 inches of the prisoners. Contact and two actions free one prisoner.

Scenario 7: Straight Skirmish

This scenario takes place during the conflict between Helium and Zodanga. John Carter and his friends set out to investigate a possible enemy-flanking maneuver. In so doing, they come across a Zodangan patrol looking for the exact spot at which they might exploit that flank. Carter realizes his flank might be exposed here based on Tars' knowledge of the area.

Both sides practice noise discipline, giving neither an advantage. The two sides stumble upon each other at the same time.

Set Up



A skirmish game typically takes place on a smaller board than the standard 6 by 4 war gaming table. The smaller the board, the sooner the conflict. Terrain is important if it slows movement in the basic game, but not for cover. If you aren't using the cover rules on page 86, then set up three to five areas of difficult terrain. This forces troops around such obstacles. Solid buildings, dunes, of hills work as well.

The key is to present choices, tactical choices. Is it worth spending the Momentum to cross the difficult terrain easily, or do you maneuver around it and into the line of fire of your enemy?

For this "standard skirmish" we recommend using 3-5 pieces of impassable terrain and 2-3 pieces of rough terrain — sand, rocky badlands, petrified woods, etc.

Players can roll off d20s for who deploys first, or they can use the standard initiative system. Whoever wins decides whether their side deploys first or second and on what table edge.

Forces

For a standard game, a mix of squads and single heroic figures is best. This gives both sides many options and generates plenty of Momentum. For our purposes, one side has a single squad and 3 Heroes. The other has a single Hero and Three squads.

HEROES

- John Carter
- Dejah Thoris
- Tars Tarkas
- 1 squad of 5 Helium Fighters

VILLAINS

- An experienced red Martian officer (use Tan Hadron stats and model)
- 2 squads of 5 Zodangan Fighting Crew
- 1 squad of 5 Tharks

Special Rules

No special rules are set for a standard skirmish, but players should try the advanced rules. You can introduce them once you have the basic rules down.

Victory Conditions

In the standard face-off, victory conditions are determined by standard play rules. However, in this particular scenario John Carter, Tars, and Dejah are objectives of opportunity (counts as a normal objective) for the Zodangans. John Carter is worth 5 Momentum if dispatched, and the others are worth 3 each.

Carter realizes he must kill all members of the opposing side, so they cannot inform the main body of the exposed flank.

Conversely, at least one model from the Zodangan side must make it off the board via the side Carter and his side deploy. Each model that makes it off the board garners 5 Momentum for the Zodangan side.

Objectives

- For a standard skirmish game, use between three and five objectives. Two should be worth 5-7 Momentum and the rest 3. An uneven number tends to push players to race for objectives faster or dismiss them and focus on killing the other side before they can capture many extra Momentum.
- For this game, Carter, Dejah, and Tars are objectives. John is worth 5 Momentum. Tars and Dejah are worth 3 each.
- Further three of the ruins are worth 2 Momentum each if held.

CHAPTER 7: FALL OF THE EIDOLON

Whether your group played through ***Phantoms of Mars***, or not does not diminish the enjoyment of this loose sequel. Over the course of these scenarios, players fight for secrets long buried, the freedom of all of Helium and, at one point, even fight themselves… all the while struggling against a devious mastermind's malicious ambitions.

Weird science and an ancient Martian race conspire to revitalize the goals of the Eidolon, but this time with a new sinister plan and a phantom army!

Playing the Campaign

As a miniatures game, this campaign is best played by two players who alternate playing the side of the heroes and villains each game. Should both players agree, they may control one side for the duration of the campaign.

The scenarios herein follow the basic game rules along with some added surprises to switch things up. From mighty Helium to the far northern pole of Barsoom, once again heroes are needed in a time of decline and returning darkness….

Victory and Defeat

Many miniatures game players want at least some way to track who beat who. It is a game after all. In this campaign, you can simply tally who won each scenario and see which side comes out on top. Alternatively, you can score the entirety of the campaign based on units slain in combat. Squads do not count, but the "death" of John Carter or Dejah Thoris is worth five points. We here note that they do not actually die, they are just dispatched for that single scenario. Some deus ex machina saves the heroes off the tabletop. Tars Tarkas and other named models of his stature are worth three points each time they are dispatched.

Similarly, any Tough or Hero level villains are worth Momentum — 5 for a Hero and 3 for a Tough.

Finally, you can simply record the number of objectives each side held at the end of each game. Keep adding them up over the ten scenarios, and you'll have a winner. This last method provides the most tactical experience and increases the tension surrounding objectives.

The method we used was to see who met the victory conditions in each game. That player then "won" that game. We only considered objectives as they pertain to individual scenarios. This is the easiest and most narrative way to play. It also has the benefit of allowing the players to create their own narrative about what happened between each battle. While we give you our version, you and your friends are free to insert consequences from one game to the next based on who won.

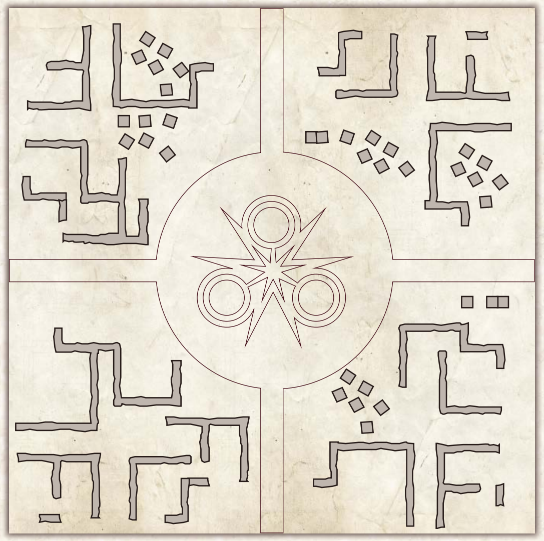
As mentioned before, the first rule of ***John Carter*** is to have good, pulpy fun. You can do that whether your side wins or losses. Fate is fickle and, as all of us know, so are the dice. Roll them and have a good time.

PART 1: THE EIDOLON RETURN

Some small while ago—as portrayed in the Phantoms of Mars campaign—a noble group of heroes foiled the machinations of a cult bent on mind control. With the villains vanquished, the people of Helium soon turned their minds to other problems, as did the royal court. Yet John Cater, having seen many lifetimes of war, knew that the enemy driven away almost invariably comes back. He was right.

While no firm evidence of the Eidolon's return was brought before him, numerous clues lead Carter to believe the remnants of the foul Dominator Ray have been taken by unknown persons and sold in the Helium market. While it is true that bits of wreckage are, indeed, in nefarious hands none were sold at market. That was a bit of false intelligence designed to lure Carter and his retinue to the market where assassins wait to kill them. The oddest part, though, is that none of these assassins seems to have reason to want to harm Carter—most are loyal subjects and some even his own soldiers. It is as if someone entered their minds and now pulls the strings of their body in a danse macabre. If Carter can defeat these assassins, and avoid killing innocents, he may have a chance to gain information Helium desperately needs.

SET UP



The battle takes place on an area of 2 by 2 or 3 x 3 feet. The terrain should attempt to replicate a market with stalls or shops and paths between.

Unlike many miniatures scenarios, this one has a different obstacle—innocents. The assassins are actually mind controlled by forces as yet unknown. That means the entire crowd could be an enemy or a friend. John Carter's player won't know which is which until they attack. This allows the opposing player to feint with stand-ins. Use any miniatures or counters you have at hand to portray the customers at the market, only swapping them out when the opposing player reveals a group or single model as an assassin.

The assassin player must decide where to place the assassins for maximum effect. They also automatically gain initiative in the first turn and, for purposes of further turns, count as having 3 extra Momentum left over in addition to that side's actual amount. You must place 25 generic miniature or markers onto the table before the game begins. These are placed by the villain. The villain player and hero player then alternate moving 5 civilians each turn. Each move only six inches per round until revealed as a killer.

FORCES

The following models are used in this scenario.

HEROES

The hero's force consists of the following models:

- John Carter
- Dejah Thoris
- Tars Tarkas

VILLAINS

The villain has three squads with one in reserve. These squads are:

- 1 squad of 5 of Helium Fighters (these proxy for the assassins once revealed).
- 1 squad of 5 of Zodangan Crew
- Squad of Tharks (as many as summoned for reinforcements)

SPECIAL RULES

John, Dejah, and Tars can each use one action to determine whether three models within 4 inches are friendly or out to kill them. This is a DC3 test.

Reinforcements: Once the first squad of Tharks have been dispatched, the villains may summon another squad of 5 Tharks for the cost of 5 Momentum.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The villain must dispatch two of the three heroes to win.

The heroes must defeat three of the four squads of killers to win.

OBJECTIVES

The market itself has no inherent strategic importance, but certain places on the board give temporary advantage. See the map for the location of each objective. Also note that the villain may only position one squad of hidden troops next to an objective to start. Once revealed, they gain that objective's bonus.

The following objectives confer Momentum to whoever has claim of them.

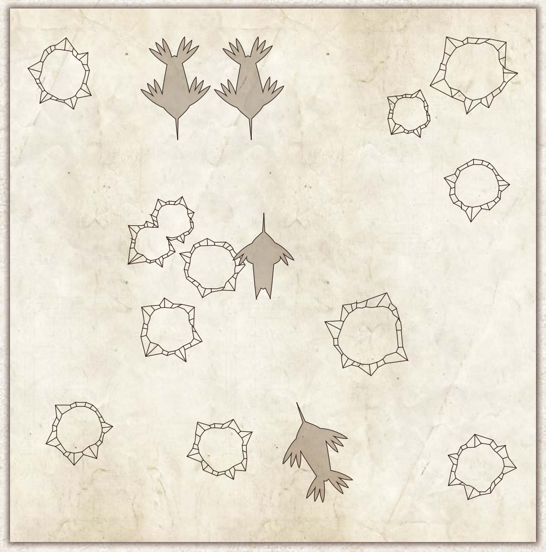
- The Plinth—3 Momentum
- The Wagon—3 Momentum
- The Spice Tent—3 Momentum

PART 2: THE CHASE

As Carter and friends wait for royal soldiers to arrive, Dejah spies a single-seat flier taking off from a nearby rooftop in quite a hurry. As the flier leaves, some of the wounded "assassins" come to their senses, horrified at what just occurred.

Thinking quickly, Dejah commandeers a Helium flier as the soldiers arrive. She kisses Carter quickly, and with that she takes off after the mysterious flier. The small flier is fast, but not as fast as a Helium military skiff. Soon, she catches up to the object of her pursuit, but two more fliers appear behind a low canyon wall outside Helium. Now, Dejah must grab the red Martian piloting the flier while fighting off these new arrivals. A daunting combat ensues!

SET UP



Dejah commandeered a Helium naval flier with a unit of Helium soldiers aboard. Set her and her ship at the southern edge of a board at least 4 by 4 feet square.

The red Martian controls a small flier in the middle of the board and will hereafter be controlled by the player who has the most Momentum left at the end of the previous turn.

On the opposing northern edge of the board are the two other fliers. One is stocked with a squad of ruffians (use Zodangan Fighting Crew and their stats), while an imposing, white haired red Martian commands the other flier. This is a mercenary captain of some repute, Kaldor Kel .

FORCES

The mercenary captain, Kel, hired thugs in case the man in the flier was seen leaving the scene of the assassination. The following models are used in this scenario.

HEROES

The hero's force consists of the following models:

- Dejah Thoris
- 1 squad of 5 Red Martian Riflemen
- 1 Medium Flier (unarmed)

VILLAINS

The villain controls the other fliers. That side is comprised of:

- Kaldor Kel (use Kantos Kan's stats and miniature, treat as a Hero for this scenario, ignore special ability)
- 1 squad of 5 ruffians (use Zodangan Fighting Crew models and stats)
- 1 small flier (unarmed)
- 2 Medium Fliers (unarmed)

SPECIAL RULES

This scenario uses the airship rules on page 92. None of the fliers are armed, but that doesn't mean they cannot be shot down.

If Dejah wins, it is assumed she captures the imposing mercenary.

If the villains win, it is assumed Dejah is captured necessitating a rescue (see the optional scenario on the following pages).

VICTORY CONDITIONS

Dejah must get the red Martian from the flier off her end of the board. If she succeeds in so doing, she wins.

The villain must either capture the red Martian or kill him, because Dejah can get no information from a dead man.

OBJECTIVES

The red Martian in the flier is a spy of some repute from Lesser Helium. He knows who hired him. Holding him alive is worth 5 Momentum to either side (the villains could well use his direct report of how the mind-controlling went).

Either side also gains 3 Momentum for successfully capturing the other's medium flier(s). Only one can be captured for Momentum in this scenario.

Dejah Thoris is extremely useful to the mercenary's masters and counts as a 5 Momentum objective for that side. Dejah does not go quietly and must be dispatched.

PART 2A: THE RESCUE

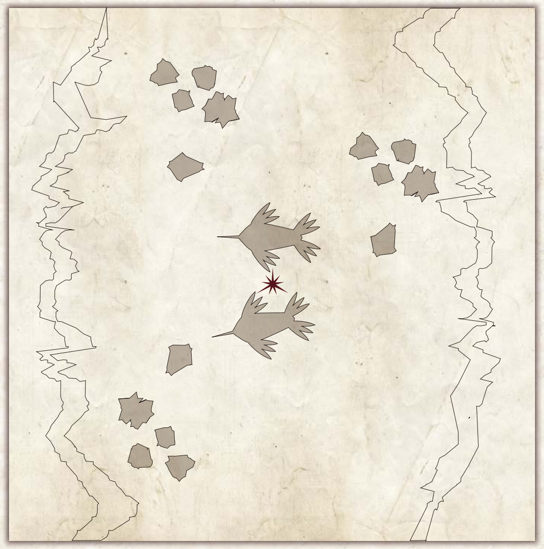
This scenario is necessary only if the heroes lost the last game. If that happened, Dejah was captured by the mercenaries and taken to a secret canyon where the flier set down to refuel. Green Martain allies saw the battle and followed the flier as far as they could. One of these Tharks informed Tars Tarkas of the likely location. As soon as John Carter heard, he leapt to action asking Tars to gather some of his best men. They then set out for the canyon..

Assuming Dejah was in fact captured, Carter and Tars arrive at the edge of the canyon and must rappel down lest they alert the guards now standing about the flier. The red Martian spy is here as well, assuming he was not killed in the previous scenario.

The guards here are also mercenaries, but with them is also a yellow Martian scientist. That scientist has valuable information for the heroes if he can be captured. The mercenary captain cannot kill him or his pay will be forfeit.

The battle begins as the heroes hit the canyon floor. It is dark, the moons of Mars carve slices in the night.

SET UP



The fight takes place in the bowl of a steep canyon. The walls of the canyon are impassable terrain for game purposes. The canyon floor is easily traversable, and no difficult ground impedes movement. Several large rocks or piles of rocks provide cover. Two medium fliers are present.

Inside the canyon is a tank filled with the eighth ray for the fliers. If shot (DC3 target) it explodes, causing 6 🎲 to all within a six inch diameter. It also counts as an objective as shown below.

As the mercenaries were not expecting company, they start at one side of the canyon while the spy and scientist are roughly near the middle about 12 inches apart.

FORCES

HEROES

The hero's force consists of the following models:

- John Carter
- Tars Tarkas
- Dejah Thoris (only after being freed)
- 1 squad of 5 Tharks

VILLAINS

The villain's side is comprised of:

- 2 Medium Fliers (unarmed)
- 1 squad of 5 Zodangan Fighting Crew
- 5 Outcast Green Martians (Use Thark models and stats)
- Mercenary Captain (use Tan Hadrom stats and model)

SPECIAL RULES

The battle occurs at night. This makes all Ranged Attacks DC3 instead of DC1. Dejah is bound in a cave on one side of the canyon. It takes two actions to free her. She then becomes part of the hero's side. Capturing the spy is a DC3 test against Ranged Melee (DC2 for Tars). The same applies to the spy. Neither play active roles in the battle.

It takes one model 2 actions to start the flier. The flier cannot take off until the following turn.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

So long as the heroes free Dejah and escape on one of the fliers, they win.

The villains must prevent the scientist from being captured. Carter and Tars are as yet unaware of his narrative role, considering him only an objective for game purposes.

OBJECTIVES

This scenario has many possible objectives.

- Dejah Thoris (she contributes her usual Momentum to the hero's pool once free).
- Scientist (5 Momentum)
- Spy (3 Momentum)
- 2 fliers (3 Momentum each)

PART 3: ABDUCTION

Meanwhile, back in Helium, Carthoris and Tara supervise the investigation into the mysterious assassination attempt. What caused normal citizens to turn on John Carter? The answer appears to lie with a strange device on the back of each would-be assassin's neck. The technology is reminiscent of the Eidolons. A break, for sure, but that enemy was long thought vanquished.

As the soldiers search Helium for more potential assassins, a raiding party attacks the imperial palace; a host of thousands of green Martians arrive out of nowhere. Their goal is the abduction of Carter and Dejah's children. But why? These should be allies?

Are they, too, under the control of these mysterious devices?

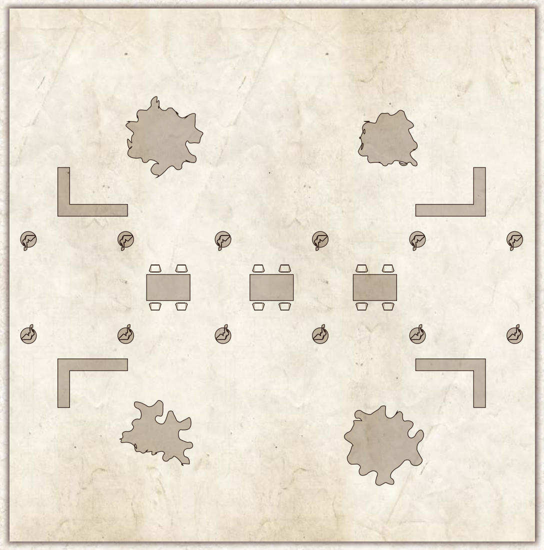
Carthoris and Tara must survive to find out.

THE TRUE PLOT

These are not green Martians attacking. In fact, the attackers are figments of the imagination of an evil Lotharian who is using technology recovered from the Eidolon's attempt at mass mind control. The Lotharian purposed this tech not to control minds but merely to project their illusions further. While they implanted the lost technology in the necks of the assassins, that was a ruse to get Carter and Dejah out of the palace.

The villain's true goal is more warped and sinister than any assassination attempt. He plans to replace citizens of Helium with phantom citizens who turn on the city from within and bring Carter's realm to its knees. He will rule through Carter's two children, once he maps their minds at his lair and makes projections of them. Even as the pair act odd, ceding influence to the Lotharians, the phantom citizens will back them. It won't look like a coup at all, not until it's too late.

SET UP



The battle takes place in a large, domed chamber of the royal palace, which sits atop a spire. This open-air observatory allows the phantom green Martians an easy way in. Carthoris and Tara have only one squad of guards as the rest are sweeping the city for other assassins.

Along with the green Martians are illusionary Zodangans. Three total squads begin the attack, so players may need to proxy other miniatures for the third squad. Three Synthetic Men make a good start.

The villain sets up on three points on the outside of the dome. The heroes set up in the middle. This scenario doesn't allow Carthoris and Tara to escape capture, but the player controlling them can still win

FORCES

HEROES

The hero's force consists of the following models:

- Carthoris
- Tara
- 1 squad of 5 Helium Fighters

VILLAINS

- Tharks (infinite squads of 5)
- Zodangan Fighting Crew (sinfinite squads of 5)

The villain has illusionary troops, so there's no real end to them. Instead of beating all the enemies, the hero wins by surviving for 5 turns before being captured. This is about attrition. The plot device demands the pair are captured.

SPECIAL RULES

Reinforcements: The villain starts with three squads listed above. They can receive reinforcements each turn for 5 Momentum. In turn two, the villain gets one squad for five Momentum. This serves as a great Momentum generating machine. Unreal troops are nice that way.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

If Tara or Carthoris are still on their feet by the end of turn five, the heroes win. If they are not, the villains win.

OBJECTIVES

This scenario doesn't have traditional objectives. The Momentum for the villains is explained above. For the Heroes, they receive their normal Momentum on turn one, but Tara, Carthoris, and the five guards each generate an extra Momentum token in turn two, then two in turn three, and so on.

Part 4: Airy Nothing

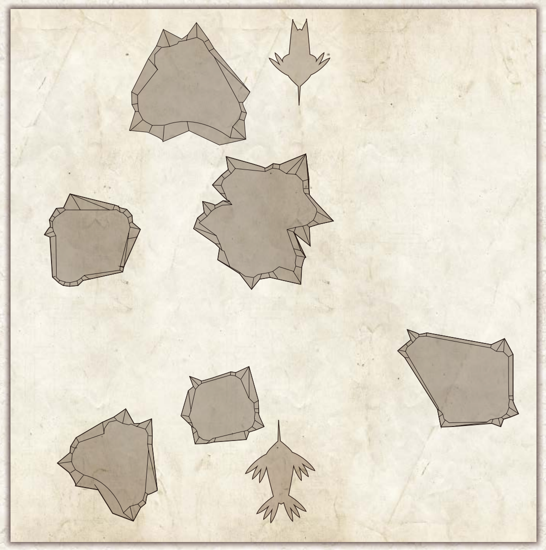
Upon their return to the imperial palace, John and Dejah learn their two children were kidnapped. This is dire news, but Carter's scientists identified the nature of the mind control devices on the would-be assassins and even captured a new one. After removing the device, the citizen remembered everything. "It was as if I was another person, watching some echo of myself intent on destroying Helium and the Carter line."

The device may have made him a puppet, but a puppet who remembers. The mad scientist who captured him and the others, and then implanted them with these devices, was a white Martian named Korvos Del. He, along with remnant of the Eidolon cult are bent on destroying not only Helium, but Carter personally.

Tars Tarkas, meanwhile, has set his green hordes on the scent of any suspicious activity. They found some — Tharks who disappeared into the horizon as if in a ripple of heat, only to reveal instead a smaller group of white Martians. Tars' people followed them. They have a location where they believe the Carter heirs were taken.

With that, Dejah sends for an airship and, in no time at all, the trio is aloft in the dusky skies pointed east into the wastes toward what end they know not. The ship travels far, coming upon a strange storm through which they pass. Something feels off about that storm, but the heroes have no time for rumination as a large armed flier appears before them.

Set Up



Mesas litter an otherwise flat plain, jutting from Barsoom like the wheelhouses of great ships. Behind one of these lurks an actual airship — a hulking giant. It begins at one end of the board. Carter and his medium sized ship start at the other.

The storm they passed through was a Lotharian illusion. So, too, is the airship — but it seems real, and continues coherence until either the heroes find the Lotharians imagining it, or Carter and his people wind up in the brig.

Forces

This is a battle between a large and medium airship. However, the large airship is a an illusionary craft. That being the case, even if it takes full damage, it won't sink. At that point, the heroes realize what it is, but must board the illusory ship and find the pilots/creators. Once they have them, they can sneak into the facility where their children are held by using the Lotharian's own mind tricks against them.

HEROES

- John Carter
- Tars Tarkas
- Dejah Thoris
- 1 squad of 5 Helium Fighters

VILLAINS

- Naval Captain (use stats and model for Tan Hadron)
- 1 squad of 5 Soldiers (Use stats and model for Zodangan Fighting Crew)
- 1 squad of 5 Tharks
- 1 White Ape attacking Carter's ship and crew.

Special Rules

If the White Ape, or other enemies, destroy Carter's ship, the hero player can make a DC5 test using Carter's Ranged Defense to grab Tars and Dejah. They leap off the spiraling wreck and on to the nearest mesa (flat topped hill) Carter can continue to leapfrog this way to the large flier, but it exhausts one action for Tars and Dejah for the phase and both of Carter's. Carter's team better save Momentum!

The possibility of capture is genuine. If Carter and his team lose, an optional scenario *Escape!*, is played next.

Victory Conditions

The heroes must reveal the ship for the illusion it is. This happens once they defeat everyone aboard.

Objectives

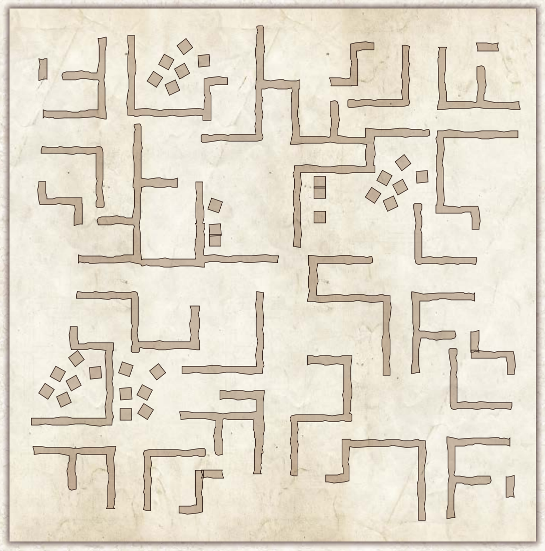
Each part of the large flier (tile section) counts as an objective if cleared of enemy troops and held by one of Carter's team. These are worth 3 Momentum.

PART 4A: ESCAPE!

This scenario need only be played if the heroes lost the last one.

Through the usual pulp lot devices, the heroes escape the cell into which they are thrown and emerge in the halls of the strange white Martian base. Creeping down the long corridors, they come upon three squads of what look to be Tharks, red Martians and Zodangans. Of course, at this point, they know this is a delusion, but disbelief does not make it vanish. Some strange power of the mind reifies these formless things and gives "name to airy nothing."

SET UP



Choose a suitable arrangement of terrain to represent big features such as rock walls, strange machinery or pools of bubbling chemicals inside the underground secret base. By placing them across the table you create large rooms and wide corridors between them, suitable for a battle between squads of heroes and villains.

Alternatively use suitable tiles such as the *Ruins of Korad* set or others you may have such as our *Conan Roleplaying Game Tile Sets* which contain tiles representing all manner of locations.

Carter's team must be placed a maximum of 8 inches way from him in any direction. The villain player places their troops on anywhere within 12 inches of Carter's side, so long as they are not within 8 inches of an exit. Tiles can be used in place of inches. In that case, use two large tiles as the distance needed between all of the above.

Allow four exits off the board. Note where they are so both players are clear.

FORCES

HEROES

The hero's force consists of the following models:

- John Carter
- Dejah Thoris
- Tars Tarkas

VILLAINS

- 1 squad of 5 Tharks
- 1 squad of 5 Zodangan Fighting Crew

SPECIAL RULES

While no special rules apply to this scenario, it should be noted that it is purposely weighted in favor of the heroes. This is reflected in victory conditions. Assume all doors are open. Rooms should be small.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The heroes must defeat all enemies to win. Each tile they take beyond where they start is worth 2 Momentum.

The villains must prevent the heroes from leading the board. If it takes the heroes more than 5 turns to escape, it counts as a win for the villain.

OBJECTIVES

The aforementioned tiles count as objectives worth 2 Momentum. The four exits count as objectives only for the villain. Each exit is worth 4 Momentum.

PART 6: DREAMS FADE AWAY

The heroes now approach the finale of their adventure.

In the center of the base lays a construction very much like the Dominator Ray. It's obviously been reconstructed from incomplete parts and looks quite the kludge. Along it, on beds, are white Martians, dreaming an army about to storm the walls of Helium. At the controls of this sinister device are Korvos Kel and one of the surviving Eidolons. More importantly, at the back of this massive room, Carthoris and Tara are trapped inside strange tanks.

As soon as the heroes enter the room, more guards appear. Just as the fray is about to start, two other figures appear — Another John Carter and another Dejah Thoris! The machines scanned their children's memories and produced perfect though-form replicas them both. Now, the heroes must square off against not only a host of troops but themselves!

SET UP

The room is a giant cavern. The entire board, 4 by 4, comprises the room. The device sits squarely in the center. The sleeping white Martians are protruding around it like spokes. There are eight of them.

The heroes begin on one side of the board. The villain deploys first in this case. That player has 3 squads to start, which may be picked from any allowed in the basic game.

The Eidolon here are not fighting men, and can be dispatched or knocked unconscious merely by touching the miniatures base. The real dangers are the duplicates of John and Dejah.

FORCES

In this strange scenario, the semi-real can kill and the heroe's deepest tactics and skills are turned against them.

HEROES

- John Carter
- Dejah Thoris
- Tars Tarkas
- Carthoris (once freed)
- Tara (once freed)

VILLAINS

- Korvos Kel (use the model and stats for Ras Thavas)
- John Carter (use the second pose)
- Dejah Thoris (use the second pose)
- 3 squads of the player's choice

SPECIAL RULES

The white Martians sleeping generate the illusory John and Dejah. If all the white Martians are disturbed — a two action task — the unreal heroes vanish. Otherwise, they persist until dispatched.

The villains start with eight extra Momentum, one for each of the sleepers. Heroes can take these away, taking the Momentum for themselves, by disconnecting them (two actions, no test necessary). Once disconnected, the Momentum ceases to generate for the villains and transfers to the heroes on the next turn.

Freeing the children takes two actions once in base contact with the tubes. They then become available for play, with corresponding Momentum, in the next turn.

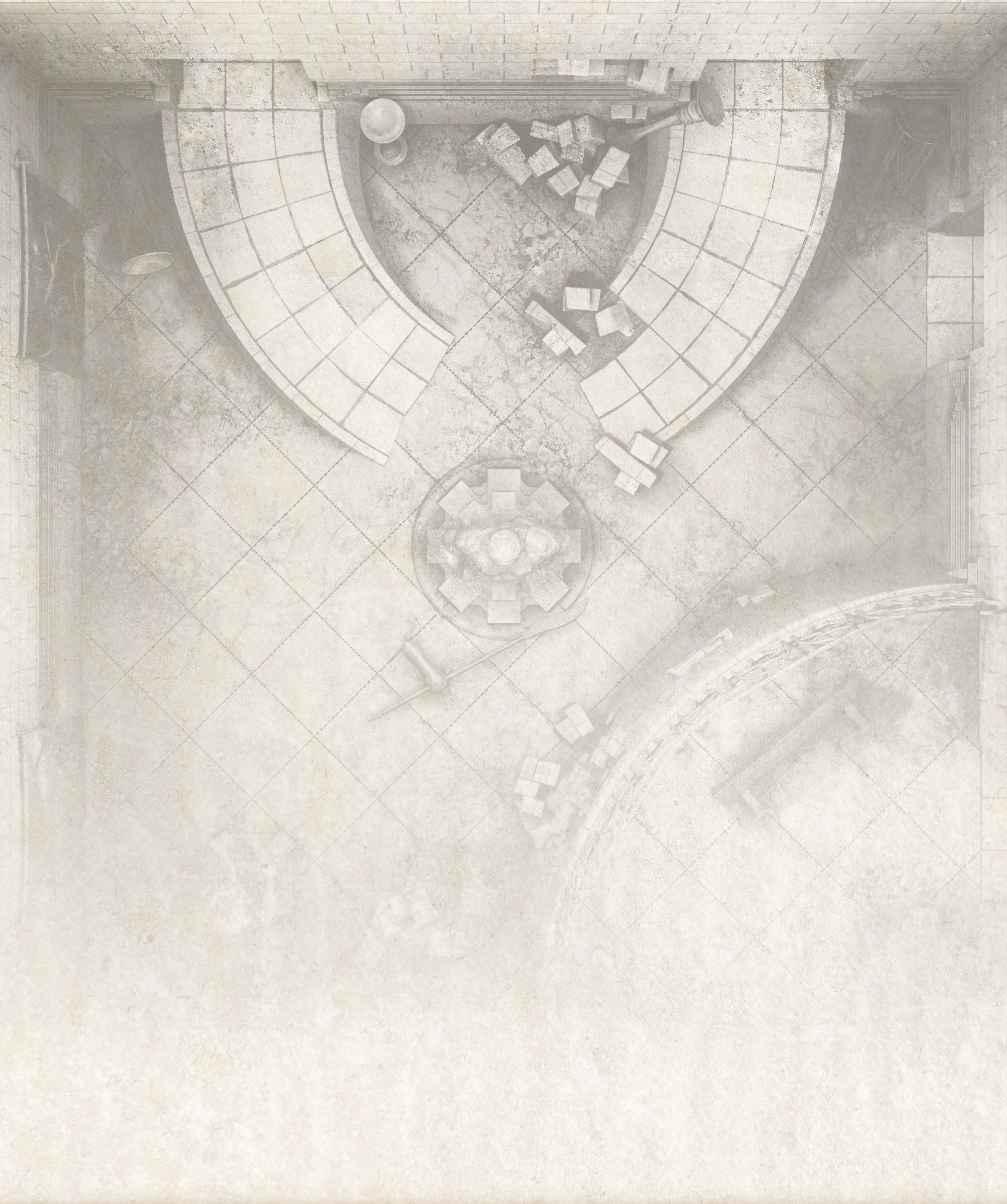
Reinforcements: Villains can spend 5 Momentum to summon a 1 squad of the player's choosing.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The villains must defeat the heroes and the heroes must defeat the villains. How else would a pulp adventure on Barsoom end?

OBJECTIVES

There are 8 objectives, one for each white Martian. The villain begins in control of all 8, a difficult situation for the heroes.



GLOSSARY OF 2D20 SKIRMISH RULES

2d20
The base roll for any test

🎲 — Combat dice
Function as in the roleplaying game, dealing damage, except effects also produce free rerolls of another combat die instead of qualities.

Activation
A unit's individual action phase within the turn. Units can only be activated once per turn.

Assist
An action that allows anyone with the Leadership special ability to combine effectiveness with a single squad of Minions. (Advanced Rule)

Beast
Any non-sentient creature such as an Apt, Banth, or White Ape. Beasts cannot claim objectives.

Charge
Any movement action that brings the attacking unit within 1 inch of its target. The attacker gets to reroll 1d20 at any point in their Melee Attack test.

Hero
Named characters can suffer 3 or more Wounds

Leader
The model in the squad around which all other models must be within 1 inch when moved. You only need move the leader rather than arrange the rest of the unit.

Leadership
A special ability that confers bonuses as noted in the text.

Minion
Any unnamed model capable of receiving only 1 Wound before being dispatched. Minions can band into squads of 5.

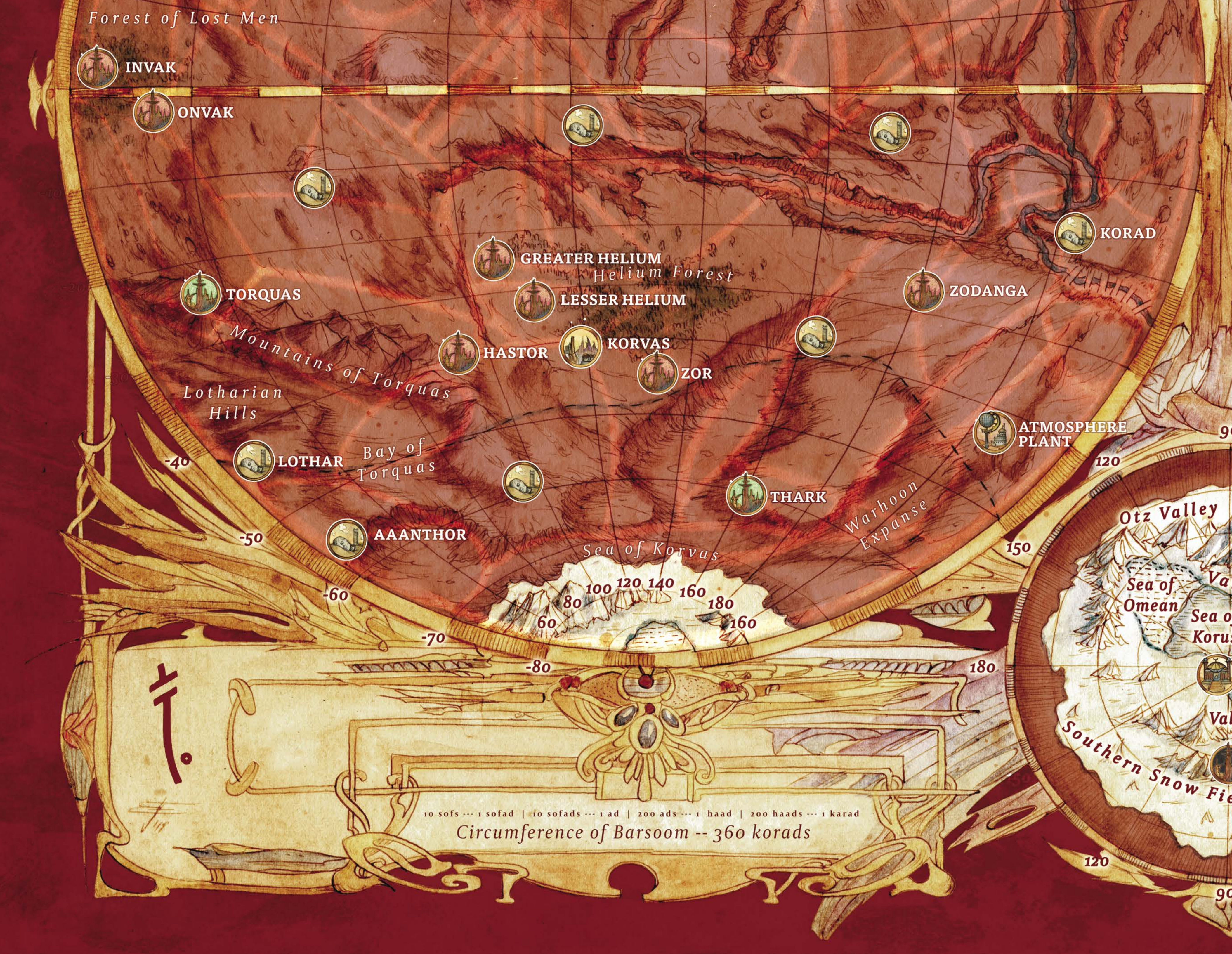
Model
Any figure on the board.

Momentum
The meta-currency of the ***Swords of Mars 2d20 Skirmish*** *game system, which represents a side's energy and motivation, allowing players to buy useful advantages.*

Squad
A unit of up to 5 Minions.

Tough
Cannot form squads, can suffer 2 or more Wounds.

Unit
Any model, or number of models, that activates as a single entity.



Forest of Lost Men
INVAK
ONVAK
KORAD
GREATER HELIUM
Helium Forest
TORQUAS
LESSER HELIUM
ZODANGA
Mountains of Torquas
HASTOR
KORVAS
ZOR
Lotharian Hills
ATMOSPHERE PLANT
90
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LOTHAR
Bay of Torquas
120
THARK
Warhoon Expanse
Otz Valley
-50
AAANTHOR
150
Sea of Korvas
Sea of Omean
Sea o
Koru
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Val
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10 sofs --- 1 sofad | 10 sofads --- 1 ad | 200 ads --- 1 haad | 200 haads --- 1 karad
Circumference of Barsoom -- 360 korads
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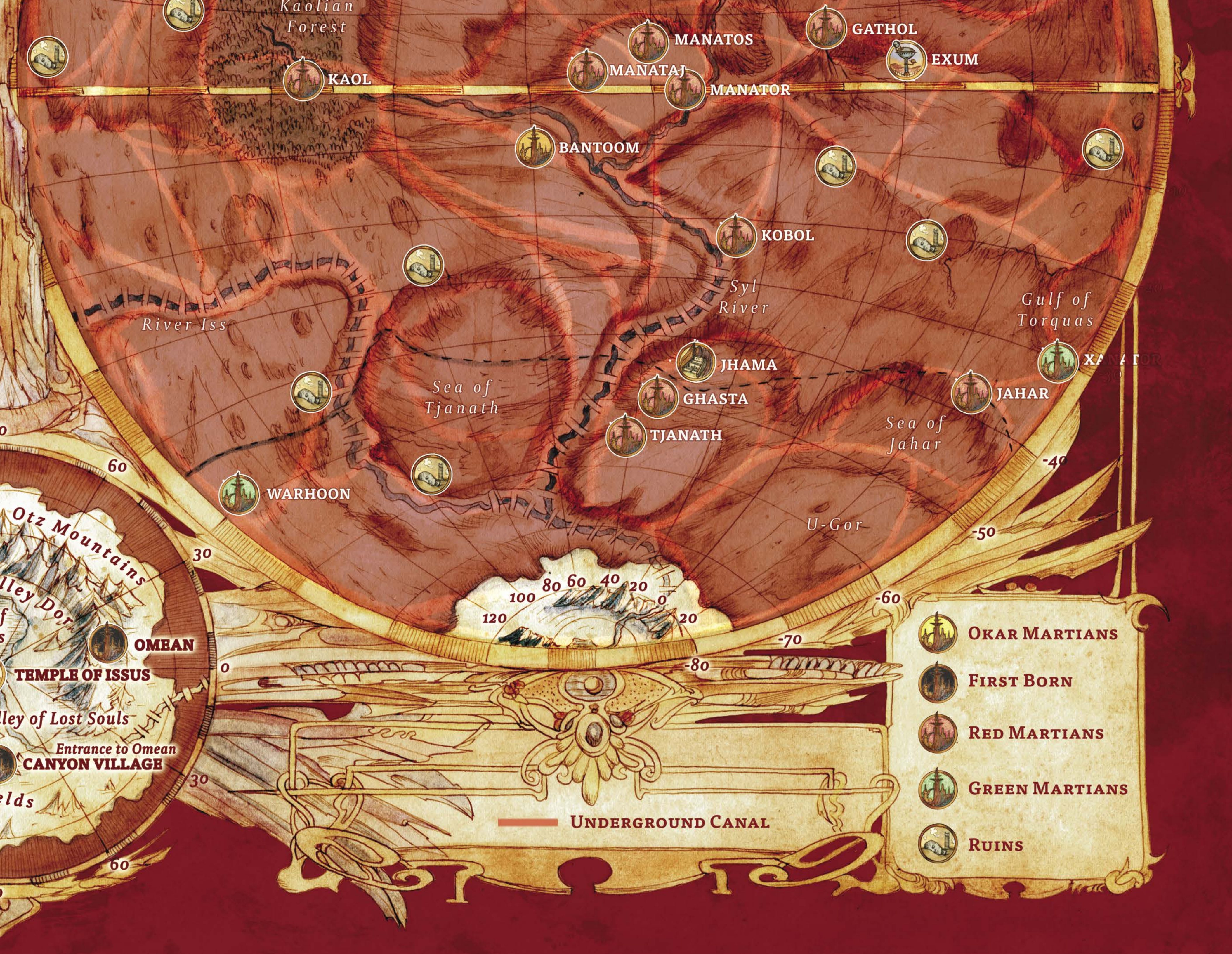
90


Kaolian Forest
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Gulf of Torquas
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Okar Martians
First Born
Red Martians
Green Martians
Ruins
Underground Canal

CONSPIRACIES ON THE DYING WORLD OF BARSOOM

> *I must admit that cold shivers played along my spine and the short hairs at the base of my head stiffened and rose up, as do those upon a hound's neck when in the night his eyes see those uncanny things which are hidden from the sight of man.*

Edgar Rice Burrough's ***John Carter of Mars: Phantoms of Mars*** provides you with a new, unique campaign for the ***John Carter of Mars: Adventures on the Dying World of Barsoom*** roleplaying game. Play through an epic story of swordplay and conspiracy, using the ***2d20 System***.

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- Narrator advice is included on how to insert the campaign into your ongoing game, or as a separate storyline.
- Rules for miniatures combat builds on the ***2d20 System*** conflict mechanics, for a standalone skirmish wargame experience.

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